

**FAMILY VIOLENCE IN AFRICAN COMMUNITIES IN THE  
WESTERN CAPE  
A THEOLOGICAL-ETHICAL ASSESSMENT**

**BY**

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## **DECLARATION**

I, the undersigned, hereby declare that the work contained in this dissertation is my own original work and that I have not previously, in its entirety or in part, submitted it at any university for a degree. I have also acknowledged every source used or quoted.

Signed by: \_\_\_\_\_

R.Z. Rashe

Date \_\_\_\_\_

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## **SUMMARY**

Family violence, commonly known as domestic violence, is becoming a serious social problem – not only in the Western Cape but in the whole country. Most women are still victims of family violence caused by their spouses. Although family violence is a serious violation of human rights, it does not seem to be recognized as such in the Church and within some African communities. Family violence results in women experiencing serious physical, economic as well as health and psychological problems.

Despite the fact that governments worldwide (including the South African government) have committed themselves through legislation, to addressing the abuse of women, most women are still experiencing family violence. Most women choose to be silent about their experiences of family violence and for various reasons, prefer to remain in such relationships. The reasons for their silence vary from one to another.

This study is essentially a theological-ethical assessment. The aim of the study was to explore what could be the churches' response and contribution in combating family violence in African communities in the Western Cape. Chapter one is an introduction to ethical decision making as discussed by H.E. Tödt in his method of "decision-making". This method is then used throughout the following chapters as the methodology to underpin this research. Chapter two deals with the first phase of this ethical decision-making, and discusses the nature of the problem. In turn, the readers and the church are challenged to see, accept and describe the problem.

Chapter three investigates the causes and complicating factors of family violence – still following the logic of Tödt's thought. Chapter four discusses the possible responses to the challenge of family violence, looking at these responses from the perspective of six structures, i.e. political, formative, punitive, reconciliatory, rehabilitative and caring structures. Chapter five deals specifically with the responsibility of the church in responding to these challenges – with particular reference to the church as congregation, as worshipping community, as denomination and as an ecumenical body as well as individual Christians. It challenges each of these levels of the church to respond to the challenge. Chapter six, the final chapter, moves towards a comprehensive theology of family transformation and reconstruction.

## OPSOMMING

Gesinsgeweld het nie net 'n ernstige maatskaplike probleem in die Wes-Kaap geword nie, maar is 'n groot probleem vir die hele land. Die meeste vroue is nog steeds teikens van gesinsgeweld wat deur hulle eggenoot gepleeg word. Alhoewel gesinsgeweld 'n ernstige skending van menseregte is, blyk dit tog dat dit nie deur die kerk en binne verskeie Afrika gemeenskappe as skending van menseregte geag word nie. Gesinsgeweld veroorsaak gevolglik talle fisiese, ekonomiese en sielkundige probleme wat vroue daaglik ervaar.

Ongeag die feit dat regerings wêreldwyd en ook veral in Suid Afrika, hulle verbind het deur verskeie wetgewing om die kwessies van die misbruik van vroue aan te spreek, ervaar die meerderheid van vroue wel nog gesinsgeweld. Die meerderheid van vroue verkies om nie oor hierdie kwessie te praat nie, om verskeie redes.

Hierdie studie is in wese 'n teologies-etiese evaluering. Die doel van hierdie studie is om vas te stel watter rol kerke kan speel in die bekamping van gesinsgeweld in sekere Afrika gemeenskappe in die Wes-Kaap. Hoofstuk een is 'n inleiding tot die proses van etiese besluitneming soos ontwikkel deur HE Tödt. Hierdie metode word deurgaans gebruik as 'n metodologie om hierdie navorsing te fundeer. Die tweede hoofstuk bied die eerste fase van etiese besluitneming, en bespreek die aard van die probleem. Dit word gebruik as 'n uitdaging aan die leser en die kerk om die probleem raak te sien, te aanvaar en dit nader te beskryf.

Die derde hoofstuk ondersoek die faktore wat na gesinsgeweld lei, steeds in navolging van Tödt se denke. Hoofstuk vier bespreek dan moontlike reaksies op die uitdaging van gesinsgeweld. Ses reaksies word uiteengesit, naamlik vanuit politiese, formatiewe, strawwende, versoenende, rehabiliterende en sorg-georiënteerde perspektiewe. Hoofstuk vyf handel spesifiek oor die verantwoordelikheid van die kerk in sy reaksie teenoor die uitdagings, met die klem op die kerk as gemeente, aanbiddingsgemeenskap, denominasie en ekumeniese liggaam, sowel as die kerk as individuele christene. 'n Uitdaging word tot al hierdie vlakke van kerkwees gerig. Hoofstuk ses, die laaste hoofstuk, kyk terug op wat

bespreek is en pleit vir 'n omvattende teologie van transformasie en heropbou van die familie.

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## CHAPTER ONE

*“Families, we like to believe, are places filled with love where we can grow safely, learn how to behave and become healthy individuals. The sad truth is that for...women and children the home has been a far more violent place to be than the street,” Courtney Esposito.<sup>1</sup>*

### 1.1. RESEARCH BACKGROUND

All over the world people are talking about the widespread problem of family violence. A number of organizations and policy-makers are admitting that family violence has serious consequences for women’s health and consequently impacts negatively on societies. Some people are getting the message about family violence. In South Africa a significant number of women are admitted on a daily basis to hospitals and clinics with injuries that they have sustained in their abusive situations.<sup>2</sup>

The high degree of family violence has turned ministering to victims in congregations into an unavoidable challenge. This is especially the case with ministers who are convinced that the church has a particular role to play in society. Many issues are confronting the country and the church.<sup>3</sup> In the past the church was challenged with the responsibility of responding to the apartheid system that oppressed people. That period has come and passed. Now there is another challenge that needs the church’s response and that is family violence. It will be too broad to merely refer to family violence in the South African society, because by implication it will mean that other geographical areas must be investigated as well. To be specific, this study focuses on the African communities around the Western Cape. The involvement of the author of this work as a minister in situations of family violence will also interact with the research material, which will be used in this study.<sup>4</sup>

First, it must be stated that one of the impelling factors that triggered the author’s interest in the subject mentioned, was his personal experience as a minister with a passion for family life and

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<sup>1</sup> Courtney Esposito ‘The faces and facts of family violence’ Christopher News Note #419, accessed from [www.christophers.org](http://www.christophers.org). Christopher is a domestic abuse survivor counsellor at New Jersey’s Women Space.

<sup>2</sup> See Usden et al. 1999, *Violence against Women in South Africa*.

<sup>3</sup> The author is aware that there are a number of challenges that are facing the church. Issues such as poverty, HIV/AIDS etc are all major challenges; however the author will focus primarily on family violence.

<sup>4</sup> The author approaches this study as someone who has been a pastor of a congregation for a number of years and has also been involved in a number of family enrichment programs in some local NGOs based in Gugulethu, South Africa. He will endeavour to deal with the challenges that he was confronted with particular with family violence in African homes.

family enrichment. The author had realized that family violence was not only found in the homes of non-believers, but that it is also prevalent in the homes of believers. An observation was registered that many Christian families, women, men and children have always felt unsafe in their homes because of the cruelty that has grown in human hearts. Mothers today do not feel comfortable to leave their children with their fathers or some members of the family or extended family, because they fear that their children may be abused. For the church and many congregations this presents a serious challenge, if not a spiritual crisis.

The issue of family violence creates lack of trust and an atmosphere of fear amongst families. As a Christian and a minister in a congregation, I believe that if there is no trust and faith amongst family members, problems usually ensue. The implication of this results in chances for a healthy family life being very slim. In order to restore love and trust in families, the church and other stakeholders have to respond to the issues of family violence. It is often difficult for the church to minister to wounded families and traumatized Christians. However, the church cannot expect to have healthy communities if the families are broken down. Family violence has become an ethical problem, which challenges all social structures including the church, which should always protect the rights of all – especially the victims. For the church and its ministry, this is more than an ethical problem. It has become a spiritual and undeniably, a theological problem. The church's faith in God as confession of the gospel is itself at stake.

Secondly, the interest in this subject came as a result of the author's involvement as a family counsellor with a local organization stationed in Gugulethu, called Ilitha Labantu. It was shocking to see and experience a large number of battered women and children coming to report their cases and seeking emotional and physical support. This raised a number of questions in the author's mind that were difficult to answer, in terms of the foundation of families and how people, today, in this context understand the meaning of marriage. Why do people still get married if they ill-treat one another? Stories of people who were victims of family violence will be narrated in the next chapter to demonstrate the seriousness and extent of the problem.

What is becoming clear about the problem of family violence is that there are at least two issues surrounding this subject. First- it must be stated that recently there has been vigorous reporting in the media (both electronically and in print) about the subject in question. Secondly, in contrast to the past where people often preferred not to speak about this subject (at least in churches,

congregations and homes), people have now increasingly started to admit to the reality of this problem. This study attempts to explore these two issues fully.

Through listening to the experiences of victims of family violence, on television and radio news as well as reading reports from newspapers, it becomes clear that the problem of family violence is a reality and reports on it are escalating. Maconachie, one of the popular South African researchers in the field of violence against women and children who is also working for the Human Science Research Council, argues that one thing that makes it difficult to expose and make family violence known, is the fact that it occurs within the intimate, private relationship.<sup>5</sup>

Many attempts have been made to increase reporting of the incidents of family violence, in order to make them better known to the public. For years family violence has been treated as a secret and as an internal problem. An African theologian advocate for women's theology, Isabel Phiri, contends that since South Africa became a democratic country in 1994, there has been a higher rate of reporting about violence against women. Phiri's observation about this matter is underpinned by the observations of Bollen et al. Sandra Bollen, Lillian Artz, Lisa Vetten and Antoinette Louw observe that:

“Through the efforts of women's service providers, Non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and the academic community, violence against women has been brought to the forefront of public and political attention. Along with increased efforts to secure appropriate services and legal reform for survivors of gender based violence, aiming to provide more substantive information and discussion about the nature, scope and dimensions of the problem....”<sup>6</sup>

The reason why people are now reporting incidents of family violence and beginning to talk about them is simply because they are becoming aware that violence against women is a human rights issue. People, especially women, were not educated about their rights in the past. Family violence is not a problem of a few individuals, but rather it is a problem which is rooted and

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<sup>5</sup> See M. Maconachie et al... 1993, *Battered Women Seeking Solutions: A study of women who have taken refuge at the Rape crisis shelter in Cape Town South Africa*, Human Research Council Co-operative Research program on marriage and family life, HSRC Printers, Pretoria.

<sup>6</sup> See A.I. Phiri, 'Domestic Violence in Christian Homes: A Durban case study', in *Journal of Constructive Theology*, Vol.6 No. 2 December, (2005, 85-86). Isabel Phiri is a Professor of theology and the Director of the School of Religion and Culture at the University of Durban-Westville, Durban. She is the Co-coordinator of the KwaZulu-Natal Chapter of the Circle for Concerned African Women Theologians.

nurtured in social relationships and structures. Because this is so embedded, stopping family violence requires a coordinated community response where health, justice, and social service systems join with educational, religious, and victim services, in an effort to confront violence.

There has been a lot of silence on the issue of family violence both from the family as well as the church. In some situations and areas it was treated as normal and as a family affair. Perhaps one of the causes for this was that most women did not know much about their rights and they also took it as norm to be treated differently by their spouses. In most cases those who are silent about family violence are the victims. In other instances, family members of the victim prefer not to admit the reality of abuse in their homes. One in every three members of a church is a victim or survivor of domestic violence or sexual assault.<sup>7</sup> Yet the faith community is often the last place those victims will turn to for help. This presents a sad but serious indictment of congregations and churches.

The church too, is silent or possibly trying to avoid the issue of about family violence. It is hardly spoken about even during sermons. The church needs to be a safe harbour of education, compassion and healing for families who suffer from abuse and family violence. It is hoped that this research project will explore possible suggestions with which to respond to this challenge. It is possible that the increase of family violence has been caused by the culture of silence. This is part of the problem that has to be investigated.

Why are we, as a country, facing this issue when we have a wonderful legislation which protects women and children? Why are so many women still abused? Are awareness raising programmes created in communities not effective enough? Why is the church so silent about this? What is the church doing about the situation? In the light of the above questions, my experience – through that which I have heard and read – has encouraged me to undertake this research project and explore the question at hand: “*What can the church do about this challenge?*” Hence, the research topic decided upon is, “*Family violence in African communities in the Western Cape. A theological-ethical assessment.*”

Family violence can be regarded as being one of the most sensitive subjects addressed by social sciences. This problem has continued throughout history. Most of the time this problem was not reported and remained unchallenged. Owing to the sensitive nature of women abuse, people are

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<sup>7</sup> The next chapter will deal with the statistics to support this claim.

not always keen to explore the complexity of this problem. It is not a problem faced by the Western Cape or South Africa solely, but rather a global problem which results in women still being the victims of family violence and abuse. It is not only the problem in the Western Cape or South Africa, but rather globally that women are still victims of family violence and abuse.<sup>8</sup> Family violence is so common that it transcends social, economic, geographical, religious and cultural boundaries. Many people still believe that it is a certain group of women who run the risk of being abused. It is unfortunate that in South Africa this group is identified with black, uneducated and working class women. This idea is not true. All over the world 70% of all women experience violence in their families in one way or another.<sup>9</sup>

“When a close domestic relationship breaks down there is almost inevitably a great deal of tension and emotion which may well find expression in violence or a threat of violence.”<sup>10</sup> When violence in the family comes into the open, it becomes obvious and known. This type of violence usually takes place between husband and wife and is generally viewed as a social problem. Schröder and Bosman argue that ‘Violence within the family is not a new phenomenon, while its recognition as a major social problem only dates back to the early 1970s’.<sup>11</sup> It is true that the African communities knew about it in the early 1990’s, because for a long time in the African communities and other communities who were in solidarity with Africans, the focus was not on family violence, but on the political struggle for liberation.

Lesley Ann Foster observes that South Africa, as it enters its third term of democratic rule, is struggling with a myriad of problems. South Africa, it is said, has the highest statistics of gender-based violence in the world and this is shocking for a country not at war.<sup>12</sup> Family

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<sup>8</sup> See Vogelman, *Sexual force of violence*, Johannesburg, Raven Publishers, 1990.

<sup>9</sup> See Mc Call, ‘Risk factors and Sexual assault prevention’ In *Journal of Interpersonal Violence* (8). (1993), 33-35

<sup>10</sup> See Schröder and Bosman, ‘Violence in Family Life: A Legal perspective’ in *Violence and family life in a contemporary South Africa research and policy issues*. (Eds.) Glanz L.E. and Spiegel A.D. (Pretoria, HSRC Publishers, 1996), 217. Bosman was formerly a practicing advocate at the Pretoria Bar and Professor of Law at the University of South Africa. Advocate Bosman is at present Chief Family Advocate of the Republic of South Africa. Her major interest is the legal protection of women’s rights and children’s rights. Schröder is at present a researcher at the South African Law Commission. He has a special interest in family law and has conducted research on the amendment of section 7(3) of the Divorce Act. They are both writing from a legal perspective.

<sup>11</sup> See Schröder and Bosman, ‘Violence in Family Life: A Legal perspective’ In *Violence and family life in a contemporary South Africa research and policy issues*, 217

<sup>12</sup> See Lesley A. Foster’s presentation on ‘Violence against Women: The Problems in South Africa’ accessed at [www.maswsc@iafrica.com](http://www.maswsc@iafrica.com). Lesley Ann Foster is the founder of the Masimanyane Women’s Support Centre - the first gender specific centre in East London, South Africa. In addition to her work with the center, she is involved with the Women’s Caucus of the UN Human Rights Commission and is

violence is becoming the country's second struggle area needing serious attention; hence, President Mandela in his book *Long walk to freedom* writes: "We are not yet free; we have only earned the right to be free".<sup>13</sup>

What does this mean in the context of family violence? It means that women and children are not yet free. It means that if there is one member of the family that is not free, all the other members are not yet free as well. Family violence is a problem that is growing and happening every minute of the day. Thus, the message being conveyed to us as a nation and as families, is: *wake up and do something*. This applies to the church as well.

## 1.2. PURPOSE, QUESTION AND METHODOLOGY OF THE STUDY

The purpose of this study is the quest for *ubulungisa*-justice<sup>14</sup> towards women. It seeks to investigate means of developing specific new theological proposals (based on key African concepts), for African people and families to use in their daily lives as they engage with one another to restore *ubuntu*. The presupposition of the research is that there are deep African convictions and customs expressed in key concepts, which could perhaps prove useful in this undertaking. In this research theological proposals based on *ukukhululeka* or liberation, *ukukhathala* or caring, *ukuncedana* or assisting, and *ukuzinikela* or commitment will be developed. This could be integral to the church's contribution towards overcoming family violence, which will be investigated around these concepts.<sup>15</sup>

The research question for this study can therefore be formulated as follows: How do churches respond to the problem of domestic violence in the light of the rich theological and ethical tradition? In addressing this question the theories of Edward Tödt on ethical decision-making and the theories of Dirk Smit about the six forms of the church, serve as an organizing framework for the discussion. This study was mainly done by way of a literature review. Literature in the fields

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currently co-coordinating a report for the UN on women's rights in South Africa. Lesley Foster was awarded the 1999 Katlego Spirit of Hope Award for her dedication to women survivors of violence and advocacy work for women's rights

<sup>13</sup> See CocoCachalia and Marc Suttner, *Long Walk to freedom, The Autobiography of Nelson Mandela*, Abridged, 1994.

<sup>14</sup>The *Ubulungisa* concept will be discussed at length in the content of this research study. *Ubulungisa* sometimes can be literally translated as an equivalent to justice.

<sup>15</sup> All these concepts will be investigated as a possible basis for the church's contribution towards overcoming family violence in South Africa.



of theology, criminology, sociology and other disciplines was selected and studied. Information about family violence was also acquired from other documents and sources such as Human Rights Watch and Statistics South Africa. A small but important part of the study was done by way of well prepared questions interviews.

### 1.3. DESCRIBING THE THEORIES

This thesis is an ethical theological evaluation of the church's response to family violence. This argument will be based on two influential theories, namely Hans Edward Tödt's theory of ethical decision-making and Dirk Smit's theory of ecclesiological forms. Numerous South African theologians are using Tödt's theory on moral decision-making. The author joined these theologians in using Tödt's approach as he carried out this research. This research also follows Tödt's<sup>16</sup> approach of the process of ethical decision-making, as explained and employed by Mouton<sup>17</sup> in presenting the following findings of the research in the successive chapters of this thesis.

There are six phases that Tödt uses to analyze and describe the process of ethical decision making. They are as follows:

1. Seeing, accepting and describing the problem.
2. Analyzing the situation.
3. Considering the possible responses available.
4. Evaluating the responses in the light of applicable norms and criteria.
5. Listening to other opinions.
6. Taking the decision.

Looking at these phases of decision-making, Smit groups them into two categories. He describes the first three phases of Tödt's ethical decision-making phases as having something to do with

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<sup>16</sup> See Tödt H.E, 'Versuch einer ethischen Theorie sittlicher Urteils findung,' in *Perspektiven theologischer Ethik* (1988, 21-48). Heinz Edward Tödt was a German Protestant theologian who did extensive work on this process of ethical decision- making.

<sup>17</sup> See Mouton *Reading a New Testament document ethically; towards an accountable use of Scripture in Christian ethics, through analyzing the transformative potential of the Ephesians Epistle*, (Atlanta, Society of Biblical Literature, 2002). She is a Professor at University of Stellenbosch on Faculty of Theology teaching New Testament. In her book she employed the same process of decision-making looking at the possible role of the Ephesians perspective in Matters concerning good and moral action, behaviour and decisions can therefore, be helpful in order to get a better understanding of the way in which moral judgments are made and moral decisions are taken.

seeing, i.e. seeing accepting and describing the problem; analyzing the situation and considering possible responses. For him it means that without seeing, accepting and describing the problem, we cannot make any valid contribution. This means that with regard to the challenge of family violence, the church will have to be in a position to see and accept family violence as a problem in the community. He describes the next two as related to judging the situation, referring to: evaluating applicable norms, listening to the opinions of others and the sixth aspect is the aspect of acting, i.e. taking the decision.<sup>18</sup> Judging the situation will mean understanding the consequences of the problem and looking at the strategies of minimizing it or combating the problem. Eventually, this analysis by Smit will reveal unto the church: only if you understand the consequences of family violence, will you find the strategies of responding to the problem.

In order for the church to understand clearly how it can respond to this challenge of family violence, Smit's<sup>19</sup> explanation of ecclesiology becomes helpful. As the research progresses, these categories of the church as explained by Smit will be clearly investigated. Therefore, for the section on the church's response, the thesis will follow Smit's distinctions concerning the church as methodology. In his ecclesiology Smit deals with the following different forms of the church:

- (a) Worship
- (b) Congregation
- (c) Denomination
- (d) Ecumenical church
- (e) Believers
- (f) Volunteers

(a)**Worship**: Our understanding of the concept will help us to see what the Christian believers can do during worship. According to Smit, Christian worship can be demonstrated through regular worship intended to have an impact on those who attend; an impact that includes faith formation and moral formation.<sup>20</sup> The church can take this as an opportunity to respond to the challenge of family violence by giving people information about family violence. This can also

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<sup>18</sup> See D.J. Smit, 'Reformed Ethics and Economic Justice' in *Ned Geref Teologiese Tydskrif. Deel xxxvii* Nommer 3 September, Stellenbosch, (1996). This paper was presented in a conference addressing the issues of economic justice in the church. In an attempt to address the challenge of economic justice in the church he followed these six aspects of ethical decision-making by H.E. Tödt.

<sup>19</sup>Ibid.

<sup>20</sup> See Smit 'The impact of the church in South Africa after the collapse of apartheid regime' in *A new day dawning African Christians living the gospel Essays in honour of Dr. J.J.(Hans) Visser*, (2004:135)

be an opportunity to deal with victims and perpetrators in terms of faith formation and moral formation. Smit further argues that there exists a complex reciprocal relationship between liturgy and life, between worship and ethics. For him, the ways in which this happens may differ from one form of worship to another, but there are clear commonalities, not only between baptism and ethics and between the Lord's Supper and ethics, but also between regular liturgical forms and ethics.<sup>21</sup>

(b) **Congregation:** Smit uses this concept because he sees a great opportunity for the individual Christians that when they are together there are so many activities that they are engaged with. In understanding the concept 'church', Smit argues that many people view the local congregation as a place gathered for worship and celebration and for mutual fellowship and support.<sup>22</sup> Koopman on the other hand argues that the congregation has various practices.<sup>23</sup> These practices can actually enhance the fulfilment of the church's role in combating family violence. Again on this aspect of Smit's theory the thesis will demonstrate how the congregation can make a contribution in ending family violence and as well as assisting the victims.

(c) **Denomination:** Denomination can be defined as a group of congregations clustered together with commonalities. Denomination includes individual Christians, volunteers and congregations working together. In this aspect of the church the question that will be raised is what can the church as denomination do to end family violence and how the church as denomination can assist the victims of family violence?

(d) **Ecumenical church**

Ecumenical church refers to the group of denominations and faith based organizations irrespective of their doctrinal beliefs working together and doing things together. In this

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<sup>21</sup> Ibid For more information on this matter read the following sources, Geoffrey Wainwright, including *Doxology*. 'The praise of God in worship, doctrine and life', New York: Oxford University Press, 1980; *The Ecumenical moment*, Grand Rapids, MI: Wm B Eerdmans, 1983, *Worship with one accord*, New York: Oxford University Press, 1997; and for a discussion of his influence on South African circles he refers us to his personal work, D.J. Smit, Spirituality, Worship, Confession, and Church unity.' In *Ecumenical theology in worship, doctrine, and life*, D.S Cunningham et al, eds., New York: Oxford University Press, 1999.

<sup>22</sup> See Smit 2004:135, 'On the impact of the church in South Africa after the collapse of apartheid regime' in a book called *A new day dawning African Christians living the gospel Essays in honor of Dr.J.J. (Hans) Visser*. In this paper he further says that particularly for members of the African Independent Churches and of many Protestant Churches, including many Pentecostal, Evangelical and Charismatic Churches, such an understanding of 'church' comes almost naturally.

<sup>23</sup> See Koopman, 'Theology and fulfillment of social and economic rights. Some theoretical considerations' in *Theories of Social and Economic Justice*. (ed.) Sun Press, Stellenbosch. South Africa.' 2005:10.

aspect of his theory Smit sees a great potential in the ecumenical church especially when there are strong structures in place. With reference to the ecumenical church, Smit begins by giving an analysis of the history of the ecumenical church during the struggle against apartheid and he further expresses his disappointment that the church has lost that sense of togetherness.<sup>24</sup> He further argues that the story of the churches in South Africa has been and still is extremely complex and confusing. It is a story of many stories, utterly unable to be told as a single story. There are simply many different churches doing different things. For that reason the ecumenical community has lost its influence and impact after the collapse of apartheid. This aspect will be discussed at length to show how the ecumenical church can assist in the reduction of family violence and offer a response.

(e) **Believers**, according to Smit Christian believers can be defined as the salt of the earth and the light of the world. The believers are always involved in their own daily ways of following Jesus Christ and confessing the faith through their lives and actions. The individual Christian believers are empowered by their churches to minister to others. These challenges the individual Christians to see and understand their role in the public life. In this case the thesis will investigate the contribution and the role that the individual Christians can play to end family violence, being at the church, workplace or in the society.

(f) **Volunteers**: When Smit discusses this aspect of his theory he sees it as another form of the church and he refers to it as that of Christian volunteers. This refers to individual Christians who represent Christian faith in different places. In this form of the church it is where the organisations also help in formulating their own response. The logic behind this is that these volunteers can minister anywhere. As the thesis progresses it will unveil how the volunteers can make the contribution in terms of combating family violence.

Therefore, this thesis follows two theories: one by Tödt on ethical decision-making as explained and summarized by Mouton<sup>25</sup> and the other being Smit's theory on different forms of the church.

Having done this, this study moves to focus more fully on how Tödt explained and developed his theory of decision-making. Smit's ecclesiology will later be used to strengthen and support Tödt's

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<sup>24</sup> See Smit 2004:8, 'The impact of the church in South Africa after the collapse of apartheid regime.' in *A New day dawning African Christians living the gospel, Essays in honour of Visser* 2004:8

<sup>25</sup> See Mouton, *Reading a New Testament document ethically* 1995: 238

approach. The chapters of this research work will be developed through these phases of Tödt's ethical decision-making. The fifth chapter will reflect Smit's ecclesiology.

#### **1.4. EXPLANATION OF TÖDT'S THEORY OF ETHICAL DECISION-MAKING**

This section will explain the six steps of Tödt's theory of decision-making as follows: seeing, accepting and describing the problem (1.4.1.), analyzing the situation (1.4.2.), considering possible responses (1.4.3.), evaluating the applicable norms and criteria (1.4.4.), listening to other opinions (1.4.5.) and taking a decision (1.4.6.)

##### **1.4.1. SEEING, ACCEPTING AND DESCRIBING THE PROBLEM**

According to Tödt this is the first aspect in forming your opinion on the issue. Smit made a strong contribution with regard to the aspect of seeing, accepting and describing the problem. In his view, Christian ethics should be an ethics-of-seeing.<sup>26</sup> This first aspect of decision-making for Smit is extremely important. He argues that many Christian ethicists have recently emphasized the crucial role of seeing, of vision, in ethics.<sup>27</sup>

Secondly, having identified the problem, it has to be accepted as such. One must take ownership of it as your problem and as an ethical problem. Most of the time people do not want to identify themselves with problems related to family, social, global and other challenges. They rather take them as other people's responsibility to deal with. Tödt acknowledges the fact that people cannot accept all problems as their own. Mouton argues that in accepting a problem which is situated far away from one, while neglecting people and situations closer to one, an element of guilt can be involved, which makes even this aspect of accepting or not a moral issue.<sup>28</sup>

It is finally important that people should agree on the nature of the problem as a moral problem. Smit concurs with Mouton that people need to accept the needs and challenges as theirs, in such a way that it will impact on their identity and integrity, their self-understanding and character –

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<sup>26</sup> See D.J. Smit. 'On learning to see? A Reformed Perspective on the Church and the Poor.' In *Poverty, Suffering and HIV-AIDS, International Practical Theological Perspectives*, (eds.) Pamela D. Couture and Bonnie J. Miller-McLemore, (Cardiff Academic Press, 2003, 57).

<sup>27</sup> See D.J. Smit, 'Reformed Ethics and Economic Justice' In *Ned Geref Teologiese Tydskrif. Deel xxxvii* Nommer 3 September, Stellenbosch, (1995, 15), in this article it is where he emphasizes the importance of learning to see the problem.

<sup>28</sup> See Mouton, *Reading a New Testament document ethically*, 1995:237

should they fail to respond. Only this makes the problem a moral one, in distinction from merely political, economic, social or technical problems. He also makes a valid criticism that our greatest failure is that we see these needs and challenges and can speak eloquently about them, but that we take it for granted that others are responsible since they do not challenge us in our identity and integrity. As a result, we often believe that we do not have to face these needs and challenges as our problems.<sup>29</sup> Acceptance and ownership of the problem as a moral problem, challenging and involvement will assist those involved to come to a collective decision about the problem.

#### **1.4.2. ANALYSING THE SITUATION**

A second aspect is extremely important, in that it seeks to properly analyze the situation where the actual problem is embedded. It is conceded that those who analyze and are part of the context can be biased. In order to do justice in our response and contribution to the problem it is argued that a thorough investigation, which has been done in other sciences as well as with other sources of information and statistics, must be consulted. In order for this analysis of the situation to be relevant, it must be simple and accessible, explains Tödt. It must form an attempt to reduce the complex situation and rich statistics to simple, basic and fundamental theoretical assumptions.

A major aspect of this step is the interpretation of the history of the problem and the telling of the story behind the present situation and reality. To understand the challenge as a moral challenge, it is of critical importance to see the statistics and present realities also in their genealogical background, against their historical background – taking into account the complex causes and contributing factors. Tödt argues that if this aspect is ignored or underestimated, the true nature of the problem might be misjudged and a responsible decision and reaction in the present will be impossible. This means that people should take into consideration the fact that they should analyze, interpret and understand the situation even before they make decisions. On the basis of the above explanation, they could easily make wrong ethical decisions based on wrong information and mistaken assumptions about the nature of the present problem. The simplification may in fact be a falsification, a misrepresentation and therefore the interpretive, hermeneutical nature of this analysis must be acknowledged and continuously kept in mind. The analysis must be kept in mind. The analysis must remain open for critic and correction.

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<sup>29</sup> See D.J. Smit, 'Reformed Ethics and Economic Justice.' In *Poverty, Suffering and HIV-AIDS International Practical Theological Perspectives* 1995:,16

For Tödt, this leads to the fact that it is important to have insight into the history of the problem. An ethical analysis should include the past, which has lasting effects in the present situation. Tödt warns against naïve and uninformed moral assumptions and suppositions which lead people to claim that they know what to do, simply by following their own consciences and intuitions.

### **1.4.3. CONSIDERING POSSIBLE AVAILABLE RESPONSES**

The ethical analysis immediately involves a third aspect. Tödt suggests that, when dealing with the problem, we need also to consider different options or responses available to solve or alleviate the problem. We have a moral responsibility. This will mean that we need to take ownership of the problem. It means that we should be able to identify with the problem and find ways of acknowledging our responsibility. Moreover, a proper analysis of the situation will be required. In this aspect Smit contends that having seen and accepted the needs and the challenges, and having analyzed the situation carefully with the help of knowledgeable people, we should then ask: what possible solutions are available? What could perhaps be done? What are the options available, the choices before us?<sup>30</sup>

Mouton argues that Christian ethics is indeed concerned with appropriate responses to various challenges.<sup>31</sup> This clearly means that when dealing with the problem there must be different responses according to different situations that are challenging that particular community.

In terms of Mouton's understanding and interpretation of Tödt's mind, she clearly states that the reaction or responses are determined by how the people involved understand themselves as human beings.<sup>32</sup> This is caused by the fact that people involve themselves in problem-solving as human beings. According to De Villiers & Smit (1995:6) as argued by Mouton, this means that they actually devise themselves, their lives, character and moral identity in the way they design solutions to the challenges they have seen and accepted as their own. Furthermore, their behaviour cannot be separated from who they are and what they want to be.

Tödt suggests that the possible responses to the problem should be taken very seriously, because these decisions might have effects on the quality of people's future lives. This is a crucial insight

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<sup>30</sup> Ibid

<sup>31</sup> See Mouton, 1995:238.

<sup>32</sup> Ibid

of what is often called an ethics of responsibility, especially in the tradition of Dietrich Bonhoeffer in which Tödt also stands. We should consider in advance the possible future implications and consequences of our responses in the present. It is an integral part of our moral responsibility that we take possible consequences into account when considering possible ways of action available to us in the present. Therefore, Tödt further insists that such decisions be accountable to ethical evaluation. Dealing with this aspect we must focus on both long-term and short-term consequences, because we do not know what the future holds for us. In relation to the church's response to the challenge, this idea suggests that there should be both short and long-term solutions. Short-term will be assumed as immediate responses by helping the victims as soon as the problem is reported or identified. The idea of long-term will refer to what plans the church has in its teachings to prevent the problem of family violence.

Mouton reminds us of Bonhoeffer's theory in his well-known *Letters and Papers from Prison*, that not taking a decision is also taking a decision and would often be an immoral choice. Taking such a stance will make you feel guilty with the way the problem is dealt with. When we analyze the problem we take a risk of mistakes. What Mouton said in the above statement about not taking a decision is actually saying that you have already taken a decision that you are not going to respond to that particular problem.

The church is compelled to respond to the challenge of family violence because by being silent, will mean that they have decided not to respond to it. The church has no option but to respond to such social problems, also because most of the time women who are victims are usually members of the church, which makes it directly part of its pastoral calling. The church has a responsibility of spiritual oversight to their members and also ministering to the membership in different ways.

In considering the available responses the question arises: How can families be assisted in terms of assuming their duties and being responsible for as much as possible? In past years, the family had more tasks as everything that was needed in the house, for example food, clothes, furniture and implements, had to be made by the members of the family. Education and religious instructions were also the responsibility of the family. Today many of the family tasks have been taken over by other societal relationships such as the factory, business world, school, church and state. The family is therefore no longer such a comprehensive community with regard to its responsibilities. Its task is shrinking and becoming more and more limited to the upbringing, care and protection of the closest members.



The family is a moral community of love between parents and their children. It is an institution of love. The two basic components of the family are the husband-wife bond and the parent-child bond scaled by love. If love is missing in the family, the wife will feel insecure and the child will feel unprotected. They will see themselves as victims of abuse. This is described repeatedly in the Apostle's letter to the Ephesians: "Let a man so love his wife as himself. No man ever hated his own flesh and let the wife obey her husband."<sup>33</sup>

#### **1.4.4. EVALUATING RESPONSES APPLICABLE NORMS AND CRITERIA**

Mouton still following Tödt, argues that having obtained the picture of what is possibly happening and having looked at possible responses, the following stage or phase in the process of ethical decision-making, is the selection and evaluation of the responses.<sup>34</sup> It is common that people talk about 'norms' when they have to make such choices. Mouton argues that according to Tödt, norms are considered as morally relevant rules that claim to be followed in social relationships.<sup>35</sup> Norms actually dictate a certain behaviour which should be followed. Again, in addition to norms and roles, Mouton makes an emphasis that the consideration of available goods i.e. material goods, abilities, capabilities and interests, play a significant role in the solving of ethical challenges. Mouton interprets Tödt's mind, by saying that this means that the basic needs and desires of people are in conflict and competition with real deficits and limited physical means in society. The availability of goods can thus inhibit and constrain the process of ethical decision- making.

The next point here is that the claim made by different norms and the restrictions of available goods could easily lead to conflict and divergent opinions. Furthermore, as Mouton puts it, Tödt suggests that perspectives, interpretive frameworks and an overview of the context can help us to consider all the conflicting norms and goods in one moment. We are also being warned here against the ideal in morality of always wanting to do something successfully or to fully achieve the result we hope for. It is often equally important for moral life, as Tödt states according to Mouton, simply to suffer with people, because of the fact that one cannot also do or achieve what one wants to. It is one of the Christian ethic principles that it becomes extremely important to not

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<sup>33</sup> See *Holy Bible*, Ephesians 5:25

<sup>34</sup> *Ibid.*, 239

<sup>35</sup> *Ibid.*

always look for success options, but also to be willing to undergo and suffer with those experiencing defeat in what they attempt to solve.

Mouton here raises the point that Tödt's process of ethical decision-making calls for creative thinking and for creative and imaginative contributions to the discussion of decision-making on a particular problem.<sup>36</sup> In the case of the church's response to family violence this raises a challenge for the church to find some creative ways of responding to the problem. What Tödt is actually suggesting here in such situations, is that emphasis be placed on the active seeing, knowing, and understanding. Active seeing should be understood as being physically present at where the crisis is and also taking interest in the suffering of others. Perhaps in the process of seeing, options of getting involved and doing something that is immediately obvious where this active presence and creative imagination are absent.

In the light of what has been discussed in this section, it would be morally wrong to give an impression that people are always capable and in control. It also clearly shows that although they can choose how they want to act and how to put their decisions into effect, moral responsibility often also entails being present, being weak, suffering with those who suffer and perhaps bearing their burden with them without always being able to solve their problems in idealistic ways. We also need to take into consideration that Christian ethics should also reckon with the emotional side of people's judgments and responses.

#### **1.4.5. LISTENING TO THE OPINIONS OF OTHERS**

Having followed what has been said above, another important avenue is opened – the evaluation and the control of the acceptability of those forms of action which have been decided upon. Smit argues that it is necessary to ask other people and other Christians whether they agree with our thinking about the challenges and our proposals for action. He argues that we must learn from the mothers and the fathers, from the brothers and the sisters.<sup>37</sup>

This means that we are not alone in our attempt to analyze our situation and in our decision-making process. It is being encouraged that we need to be engaged in dialogue with

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<sup>36</sup> See Mouton, 1995,339

<sup>37</sup> See D.J Smit, 'Reformed Ethics and economic Justice' *Geref Teologiese Tydskrif. Deel xxxvii, Nommer 3* September 1995:18

other moral agents. Tödt sees this aspect as the most important one and of necessity; he goes on to speak of a collective responsibility. A collective responsibility means that people should work together in trying to solve the prevailing problems during that particular time.

The church should work with other existing structures that are already responding to the challenge of family violence. Working with these structures will afford them an opportunity to learn from them. It will create an opportunity to know what other structures think of the extent of the problem. This could be seen as a collective approach, whereby other people's ideas and opinions are respected. Listening to the opinions of others encourages people to reach out. Even in the case of family violence, it is important that the church listens to other people's opinions about how family violence can be eliminated.

This aspect also cautions us to be careful of generalizations, speaking on behalf of other people and imposing our viewpoints. It is necessary for us to hear other people's views and act with the approval of other moral people. Mouton argues that, for Tödt, this issue leads to another essential aspect in the process of ethical decision-making, namely "communicative freedom".<sup>38</sup> She further advances her argument by saying that the individuals should not experience the freedom of others as the restriction of their own freedom. Smit suggests that the church can be the one place in society where people find opportunities and encouragement to tell stories of their experiences.<sup>39</sup>

Data for this study will also be collected by means of some interviews with individuals, and in this process their feelings about the issue of family violence and what their views are about the possible elimination of it are tested. Their views can therefore also be tested on what should be done about perpetrators. In order to know what others' views are on family violence, guiding questions for interviewing individuals will be used to facilitate this process. These interviews will be conducted in such a way, that they include women who are victims and men who are perpetrators are also interviewed. This will help to understand the extent of the problem as well as the reasons and the victims' response to the problem.

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<sup>38</sup> See Mouton, *Reading a New Testament document ethically*, 240

<sup>39</sup> See Smit, 'Reformed Ethics and Economic Justice' 1995, 18.

#### **1.4.6. TAKING THE DECISION AND ACTING**

This aspect finally challenges us on the ethical decision-making itself. This includes questions of knowledge, will and identity. The other two aspects i.e. will and identity, can be coupled because in order to respond to something, you need to be willing to do it. Again, it also challenges one to identify him or her with those who are experiencing the problem. Our own identities are at stake when confronted with moral challenges and the question, whether we actually act, by doing something, getting involved and taking responsibility is of importance to our identity. In the biblical traditions there are many powerful calls that believers should be doers of the word and not merely people who see, but turn away, or speak, even confess, but do not act and embody.

Making the decision is not enough. We need to act on it so that the problems that we experience are identified and can be corrected. This research attempts to challenge the church to make an effort in responding to family violence. The challenge for the church is to first have knowledge of what family violence is when it takes place, why it is happening, what are the statistics and who is dealing with the problem. Such questions will empower the church with information, which will at the end assist the church with ideas as to how it can make a contribution. Having acquired that kind of information, it will be easy for the church to identify with the problem and the victims of family violence. Identifying the problem will hopefully lead to willingness to do something about it.

It becomes vital that if a decision is taken, something must be done about that particular decision so that the problems identified can be addressed. The decisions that will be taken here will concern the eradication of family violence. Family violence is something that is happening at home within the family and this alone therefore challenges the church and other structures to explore reasons that necessitated this in family structures. There are quite a number of other questions that might be raised around this issue, such as what the understanding of the concept of family in the African communities was and what the roles and expectations of the family were.

When talking about the family we refer to all forms of families, including the immediate family and the extended family. We can also include the single-parent family or married couples. In the modern industrialized Western society, the idea of an extended family has been stripped down to

the so-called nuclear family<sup>40</sup>. The family in the past had more tasks, as everything was needed in the house. For instance food, clothes, furniture and implements had to be made by the members of the family. Education and religious instruction were also responsibilities of the family. Today most of the family tasks have been taken over by other societal relationships such as factory, business world, school, church and state. The family is no longer such a comprehensive community with regards to its responsibilities. Its task is shrinking and becoming more and more limited to the up bringing, care and protection of its closest members.

We are experiencing many problems in homes. At the moment the church is the only symbol of hope. It is where people's lives can be changed. It is where healing can take place. The congregation is the place for pastoral counselling of all kinds, group counselling, one-to-one counselling and encounter groups, as long as they see themselves placed within the context of the Christian community of faith and moral inquiry.

Therefore, this means that ministers and their congregations should implement projects and programmes to help the victims to be more self-reliant. Congregations must be able to provide information, educational programmes training and support services. The members of the congregation should establish support groups for the victims of family violence in order to empower each other. By means of the interviews conducted, it will be indicated that it is possible to influence a decision-making process. Fundamentally, the decisions taken need to be implemented in order to reach the objective of this research and to address the prevailing problem. This will form the last section of the research project whereby the decisions and recommendations will be discussed.

## **5. CONCLUSION**

This chapter introduced the background of the research. It also endeavoured to explain how this research was undertaken. It explained the methodology that the whole thesis will follow. H.E. Tödt's six steps of ethical decision-making as well as Smit's different forms of the church underpin this methodology as it attempts to define the role that the church can play in combating family violence. All these were illuminated by Mouton and Smit's interpretation of Tödt's steps

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<sup>40</sup> A nuclear family is a family that is traditionally seen as one with the father, mother and a minimum number of children.

of decision-making. The objective of this chapter was to illustrate the purpose of this research project.

- The chapter organization of this thesis will accordingly be as follows. The topic of the second chapter will be: '*Seeing, accepting and describing the problem*'. This will present the definition of family violence in order to understand the concept with its different forms and categories. The chapter will also help us with some clear understanding of family violence not only from four different levels, i.e. the international, national, provincial as well as local level. It will present us with true stories as real-life reflections of family violence and also with some statistics showing the human face of the problem. Lastly it will give us some reasons for the silence and why the problem is not being reported properly. This analysis will help churches to 'learn to see' what is happening and what has been happening. It will also assist the church to acknowledge the fact that there is a problem and having seen the problem it will be able to accept it even before it can act on it.
- The third chapter will be discussed under the topic: '*Understanding the problem*'. This chapter will present us with the causes and complicating factors of family violence. Under the heading causes it will discuss four factors, i.e. socio-cultural, political, economic and legal factors. The consequences will reflect the impact of the causes of family violence on women and children as possible victims.
- Chapter four will be discussed under the topic: '*Considering possible responses*'. This chapter will present us with the structures that are dealing with family violence, i.e. first political structures, both international and national, but also provincial and local. Secondly, we will look at punitive structures. Under this subject we will make an enquiry into the police's response and the justice ministry's response to family violence. Thirdly, as we look at reconciliatory structures, we will focus on three institutions, namely non-governmental organizations, family life and the community itself. The fourth structure that this chapter will investigate will be the rehabilitative structures, using correctional services as an example. Lastly, we will look at other structures e.g. hospitals, the department of education and trade unions that are also challenged by the reality of family violence.

- The fifth chapter will discuss the topic: '*The calling of the church- a theology of ukuzinikezela*'. In order to achieve this, the fourth step of Tödt's theory of ethical decision-making argument will be taken. Based on normative understanding of the church, its nature and calling the thesis will consider what the question will be raised, which responses truly belongs to the nature and responsibility of the church. The second proposed theory will be employed, namely that of Smit's ecclesiology. This chapter will follow Smit's understanding of the Church, referring to his different forms of the church. Smit suggests six different forms of the church. This refers to the church as congregation, a place of worship, a fellowship of Christian believers and volunteers as well as a denominational and ecumenical church. Under the church as congregation the theme will examine the congregation-embodiment *ubulungisa (righteousness/justice)*. Church as worship-bringing it to God, discussing sermons preached at worship services as giving a message of *ithemba*-hope and reflecting a theology of *ukukhululeka*-liberation. Under Church as Christian believers, the theme will look at how the Christian believers can live *ukukhathala*-caring. This will be an attempt to discuss the notion of developing a theology of *ukukhathala*. In the chapter of the church as volunteers, a view will be given as to how the church as volunteers practices *ukuncedana*- assistance. Under the church as denomination, an in depth view will be given as to how the church can develop a strategy of working together and encouraging *ubunye ngamandla* (unity is strength) to overcome family violence. Lastly, under the church as an ecumenical church, an investigation into the possibility of the church breaking the silence around family violence will be rendered.
- Chapter two to five will in other words implement the first four phases of Tödt's theory of ethical decision-making in order to present an overview of factors involved when the church, today, faces the reality of family violence in the Western Cape. In other words chapter two deals with his first step seeing, accepting and describing the problem, chapter three deals with his second step- analysing the situation, chapter four deals with his third step i.e. considering the possible responses available and chapter five deals with his fourth aspect considering proper responses for the church. It will be immediately clear that phases five and six of Tödt's theory of ethical decision-making fall outside the scope of a doctoral thesis. In fact writing the thesis itself and afterwards making the findings known to the public will constitute the fifth phase since this is a motivation to others to agree or disagree. Hopefully this may contribute to a situation where the church in its

many different forms may undergo transformation to take the decisions proposed and to make an actual contribution to help our communities deal with the challenge which will constitute the last phase of Tödt's theory of ethical decision-making.

- The last chapter, chapter six, will discuss the topic: '*Towards a Theology of Transformation and Reconstruction of Families*'. This is necessary because without this transformation the church will not be able to accept this challenge. This topic will be discussed under different sub-headings i.e. discovering the road to travel, addressing structural causes, a need for moral regeneration, lessons on African ethics (looking at the significance of *ubuntu*), restoring the concept of *ukuhlonipha*, revisiting the culture of *ukuncedana* and lastly, embodying *ubulungisa*. These are recommendations that will hopefully enhance the church's contribution towards combating family violence and these will be discussed at length.



## CHAPTER TWO

### SEEING, ACCEPTING AND DESCRIBING THE PROBLEM

#### 2.1. INTRODUCTION

The previous chapter gave an overview of the problem of family violence. It also outlined how the thesis will be presented, specifically relating to the methodology that would be used. Having presented the problem and after explaining the methodology, the big question remains: ‘Can the church make any contribution to combat family violence?’ Therefore, this chapter, as mentioned earlier, will employ Tödt’s first step of ethical decision making i.e. seeing, accepting and describing the problem. The problem that will be investigated is the challenge of family violence, which is a moral challenge to the church.

It is Mouton’s opinion that for Tödt the process of seeing, accepting and describing a problem, plays a key role in the entire process of decision-making.<sup>41</sup> This chapter becomes an introduction of Tödt’s process of ethical decision- making. Firstly, this step starts by challenging people to see. Smit calls this seeing what the eyes do not see.<sup>42</sup> One of the reasons for this, implies that there could be a problem that has to be resolved and therefore still needs some attention. Seeing, in turn, can challenge the people to address the problem after it has been identified. In some cases the problem might be personal. This could be a problem that affects the church’s relationship to a particular societal challenge, etc. What is important here is that the problem is identified and seen as the actual problem. Smit supports this argument by looking at it from a Reformed ecclesiastical perspective and claiming that seeing depends on hearing and hearing is a form of

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<sup>41</sup> See Mouton 1995:236

<sup>42</sup> See D.J. Smit, On Learning to See? A Reformed Perspective on the Church and the Poor. In *Poverty, Suffering and HIV-AIDS, International Practical Theological Perspective*, (eds.) Pamela D. Couture and Bonnie J. Miller-McLemore, 2003:62. In this section of the article he argues that seeing what the eyes do not see, is a call to see more than merely meets the eye. For Smit this is an acknowledgement that the integrity, the very being, of those who see or do not see may be involved. He further says that it is precisely the question, which this tradition-from Barth, to Belhar, to Kitwe, to Debrecen, to Stellenbosch- in the Reformed tradition is raising. Smit’s point here is that this could perhaps be true that the suffering of the world, particularly as seen from the perspective of the poor of Africa, confronts the church with more than an ethical challenge, more than economic, political and social problems and responses, more than statistics, causes and results that can be measured, analyzed and described empirically.

seeing. In this claim he uses Calvin's idea that reading, seeing and hearing are one.<sup>43</sup> This is the first step according to Tödt, in forming one's opinion about an issue.

Secondly, having identified the problem, a problem has to be accepted. One must take ownership of it as one's own problem and as an ethical problem. Most of the time people do not want to identify themselves with problems related to family, social, global and other challenges. Instead they prefer to see them as other people's responsibility to deal with. Tödt acknowledges the fact that people cannot accept all problems as their own. It is for this reason that Mouton argues that in accepting a problem that is far away from one, while neglecting people and situations closer to one, an element of guilt can be involved which makes this discernment also a moral issue.<sup>44</sup>

Thirdly, in this step it is important that people should agree on the nature of the problem. This will help the church to come to a collective decision about any problem. What this chapter will attempt to do is to challenge the church to see and clearly understand that family violence is a serious problem in our communities. One aspect of making the church see and accept the reality of family violence will be to define the concept of family violence. Once again, the different forms and categories of family violence will need to be explained. It is hoped that such an attempt will enable the church to speak out against the problem in question and consequently, devise ways of seriously responding to this challenge. Having said this, another discussion is opened, which pleads for an understanding of the concept 'family violence'.

This chapter will deal with the following themes, namely: understanding the concept (2), the forms of family violence and its categories (3), different perspectives on understanding family violence (4), theories for not reporting family violence (5) and the conclusion (6)

## **2.2. UNDERSTANDING THE CONCEPT: FAMILY VIOLENCE**

As a point of entry, it ought to be stated that the church in South Africa exists in a context of violence and abuse. In some ways everyone experiences some form of violence. One of the most pervasive forms of violence used against any individual in South Africa is women abuse. For Moira Maconachie, Teresa Angless, and Mikki Van Zyl terms such as "spouse abuse, domestic violence, family violence and marital violence" serve to obfuscate the extent to which

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<sup>43</sup> See Smit.D.J. 'On Learning to See? A Reformed Perspective on the Church and the Poor' 2003:63.

<sup>44</sup> See Mouton 1995:237

predominantly women are victims of violence from men.<sup>45</sup> Gelles and Straus assert that the earliest and most enduring problem in the study of child abuse, wife abuse and family violence has been the development of a useful, clear, acceptable and accepted definition of violence.<sup>46</sup>

The term family violence is sometimes known as domestic violence. It is used to describe actions and omissions that occur in varying relationships. Felicia Sakala describes family violence as a hidden agenda. She further argues that within it are internal and external forces affecting the family systems.<sup>47</sup> This term covers incidents of physical attack. Family violence can take the form of physical and sexual violations, such as pushing, burning, throwing boiling water or acid and setting on fire and kicking. The results of such physical violence can range from bruising to death. What may start as apparently a minor attack can escalate both in intensity and frequency.

Some people use the term domestic violence to include psychological or mental violence, which can consist of repeated verbal abuse, harassment, confinement and deprivation of physical, financial and personal resources. The forms of violation may differ from one society and culture to another. Other people use the term to describe violence against women in the family only while for others it is a general label which covers any violation where the victim and perpetrator have some form of personal relationship. If it is used in a wider sense, domestic violence encompasses child abuse (physical, psychological or sexual), violence between siblings, abuse or neglect of the elderly and abuse of children by parents. Lisa Vetten contends that like sexual harassment, domestic violence did not receive the recognition of an official definition in South Africa until recently.<sup>48</sup> It was only recently that the Domestic Violence Act of 1998 describes domestic violence as including physical abuse, sexual abuse, emotional abuse, verbal psychological abuse, economic abuse, intimidation, harassment, stalking, damage to property, entry into a home without the permission from the complainant and any other abusive controlling behaviour.

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<sup>45</sup> See Maconachie M, Angless. T and Van Zyl. M *Battered Women Seeking Solutions: A study of Women who have taken Refuge at the Rape Crisis shelter in Cape Town*. Moira Maconachie is a senior researcher, Human Sciences Research Council; Teresa Angless is a Clinical Social Worker, Lecturer Department of Social Work at UCT and Mikki Van Zyl Previously Community Worker at Rape Crisis Cape Town, 1993:1

<sup>46</sup> See Gelles and Straus, *Intimate violence: Causes and Consequences*, Simon & Schuster Inc. Publishers, New York, 1988:54

<sup>47</sup> See Felicia Sakala, 'Violence Against Women in Southern Africa' In *Gender In Southern Africa: A Gender Perspective*, (eds.) Sapes Trust, Sapes Books Harare,1998:37

<sup>48</sup> See Lisa Vetten *Gender, Race and Power in the Face of Social change. Deconstructing Violence against Women in South Africa*. 1993:1

Domestic violence is a hidden problem. Most people who are victims of it are silent about it, sometimes by choice or due to family influence. According to the research done by UNICEF, it is said that women and children are often in great danger in the place where they should be safest with their families.<sup>49</sup> For many a “home” is where they face a regime of terror and violence at the hands of somebody close to them, somebody they should be able to trust. Those who are victims suffer physically and psychologically.

Therefore, in the light of this explanation domestic violence is a complex phenomenon that occurs when the abuser exercises power over the victim, who is captive in an intimate relationship. Having understood the above explanation of the concept of family violence the next section will outline the different forms of family violence and its categories.

### **2.3. THE FORMS OF FAMILY VIOLENCE AND ITS CATEGORIES**

In this section five different forms of family violence will be discussed. The first to be discussed will be hidden victims (2.3.1), secondly, emotional abuse (2.3.2.) and lastly, economic abuse (2.3.3). The intention here is not to discuss these different forms of violence at length but to show how they impact on family life.

Gelles and Straus in speaking about forms of victimization, argue, “There is a considerable consensus that violence towards women and children is a genuine social problem”.<sup>50</sup> According to Loubser, literature on domestic abuse generally distinguishes between physical and psychological abuse.<sup>51</sup> The purpose of this section is to identify, briefly, other forms of family violence and speculate as to why they have yet to capture public attention as social problems.

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<sup>49</sup> See United Nations Children’s Fund Issue No. 6 May 2000. See also Dobash R. & Dobash, R. 1979. *Violence Against Wives*, London MacMillan, Hansson, D. 1991 *Working against violence Against Women: Recommendations from Rape Crisis* (Cape Town). In Putting women on the agenda, Brazilli, S. (ed.) Johannesburg: Raven Press.

<sup>50</sup> See Gelles R.J. and Straus M.A, *Intimate Violence, causes and consequences*, Simon & Schuster Inc publishers, New York. 1998:59,

<sup>51</sup> Isabé Loubser, 1999:19 *Abuse Suffered by the Amakhoti in the Xhosa Community* Unpublished Masters Thesis, University of Stellenbosch, Stellenbosch. 1998:59, Loubser make specific reference to the research of individuals such as Folingstad, Rutledge, Hause and Polek et al.

### **2.3.1. THE HIDDEN VICTIMS**

Gelles and Straus categorize “Hidden victims”<sup>52</sup> as one of the forms of family violence. Under the category ‘hidden victims’ they refer to sibling violence, teenage victims and parent victims, elder abuse and courtship violence.

The reason why these forms of violence are called hidden abuses, is because family violence has been defined as a hidden problem. The following forms of abuse will be discussed under this category: sibling violence, child abuse, and elder victimization.

- **Sibling violence**

Sibling violence is the most common and most commonly overlooked form of family violence. It is perhaps commonly overlooked because of family relationships. A certain amount of sibling rivalry is always expected in families. Sometimes it appears that such rivalry is encouraged as a means of preparing children for the ‘dog-eat-dog’ competitive world, in which they will struggle as adults. As a result a set of expectations and social norms have been developed, which maintains that “boys will be boys” and children will fight. Most parents view conflicts between siblings as an inevitable part of growing up.

Sibling violence is certainly not new. Cain’s killing of Abel in the Bible is an example of sibling rivalry and abuse. In each home where there are two or more children between the ages of three and seventeen there will probably be regular incidents of sibling violence. Although most of these incidents consist of slaps, kicks, biting and punches, there is some fairly dangerous and violent behaviour occurring as well. The assumption is that three siblings in every one hundred use weapons towards a brother or sister. This means that more than one hundred thousand children, annually, face brothers or sisters with guns or knives in their hands.

In African societies and other societies it is generally considered normal for brothers and sisters to quarrel and sometimes to come to blows. Some parents even encourage such violence as they believe that this will teach the children to hold their beliefs in standing up for what they believe to be right. The problem is, however, that children can become socialized for violence in this manner and may therefore regard it as the normal way in which to settle disputes. Where brothers and sisters are involved, children may grow up with the idea that violence towards women is acceptable and that it may be used to cut the woman down to size and to keep her in an inferior position.

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<sup>52</sup> See Gelles and Straus, 1998:59

- **Child abuse**

Children are often the target of physical violence. Abuse is not limited to every young child. Teenagers and young children actually have the same high rate of victimization. It is not surprising that teenage victims are the missing persons of the official child abuse reports that are always presented. Teenage victims are not only victims of physical violence, but of victim blaming as well. Most of the people believe that teenagers precipitate or provoke their victimization by outrageous or provocative behaviour.

This is usually taking place in the home of the child. When talking about child abuse, one can refer to various forms of abuse – e.g. child battering, sexual abuse of a child, mental abuse. For Grant Robertson, in general terms, when speaking of sexual abuse we refer to any sexual activity with a child who cannot give informed consent to the activity.<sup>53</sup> It is well known that only a very small percentage of child abuse cases are reported to the police. A vast number of incidents are dealt with by structures such as provincial welfare departments, child welfare societies, child guidance clinics, school psychological services, hospitals and many others.

- **Elder Victimization:**

Gelles and Straus contend that abused parents often find few services and little support in the community. Unless a child kills or maims a parent, it is unlikely that the child's violent behaviour will come to public attention.<sup>54</sup> There is a vicious cycle that is responsible for the lack of community and professional services. Parents are often ashamed to talk about the abuse they experience at the hands of their children. This is because they fear that if they talk about their victimization at home, they will be publicly victimized. Parents of abusive children suffer from tremendous anxiety, depression and guilt. Parents of abusive children suffer from tremendous anxiety, depression and guilt and they are kept as psychological pensioners in their home.

This is not a new phenomenon, but we do not hear much about this aspect of family violence. In many cases the assault of elderly parents is perpetuated by their middle-aged children. The fact is

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<sup>53</sup> See Grant Robertson, *Sexual Abuse of Children in South Africa, Understanding and Dealing with the Problem*, Unibook Publishers Ltd Hammanskraal. 1998:59, See also Graser, R.R., Winship, W. (eds.) 1984, 'Child Abuse a South African Problem' In *Proceedings of National Child Abuse Conference*, Durban, University of Natal July.

<sup>54</sup> Gelles and Straus 1998:59.

that we do not hear much about what this in terms of research work done. In order to give an indication of the extent of granny bashing – there appears to be a trend in society of abused elderly members of the family who are physically weak and dependent. Granny bashing does not only refer to elderly parents being smacked, hit with the fist or kicked, but also mental and physical abuse.

Theft and the misapplication of the parent's money and property are also acts of violence as is the forcing of elderly persons to change a will. Other acts of violence include being put out of the house and placed in an old aged home against the will of the elderly person, being tied to a chair/bed so as not to be a nuisance, or being locked alone for some reasons, being administered an overdose of drugs, sleeping pills and medicines in order to make troublesome parents more manageable etc.

- **Rape within marriage**

This is another form of domestic violence between a husband and a wife. Here the husband forces the wife to have sex without her consent. This happens mostly when the husband is intoxicated. Some researchers (e.g. Gelles & Straus, 1988, Shepard & Cambell, 1992) view sexual violence as a sub-category of physical violence, while others see it as a separate category of violence (e.g. Heise et al., 1994; Tolman, 1989).<sup>55</sup> The fact that people are not talking about it does not mean it does not exist. Much work needs to be done on this area of research, but the fact that rape does occur within the marital context cannot be denied. Women are not open about it and prefer to be silent about it. Their silence about the abuse they are suffering, could be the reason why this is not known.

- **Husband battering**

This is a theme that receives little attention and writers only briefly deal with it. However, this does not mean that husband-battering does not occur. Alcoholics in particular are assaulted and battered by their wives when they are under the influence of alcohol. In most cases 3% deals with husband-battering and approximately in 39% of such cases women instituted divorce suits against

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<sup>55</sup> See Isabél Loubser 1999:19

their husbands on the grounds of abuse.<sup>56</sup> Mental abuse of the husband by his wife is another facet of this problem that is often revealed. This type of research can be very problematical owing to the fact that it is difficult to measure and define mental abuse.

### **2.3.2. EMOTIONAL ABUSE**

Gelles and Straus maintain that emotional abuse is the most hidden, most insidious, least researched and perhaps in the long run, the most damaging form of intimate victimization by loved ones.<sup>57</sup> Defining physical abuse or sexual abuse is relatively easy compared to the formidable task of setting forth what constitutes emotional abuse. Emotional abuse can be seen and defined, as belittling, scorning, ignoring, tearing down, harping and criticizing. These are all possible forms of emotional abuse. This type of abuse takes many forms and scars, while not always evident; it tends to emerge in discussions with victims of emotional battering.

It is not clearly evident how much emotional abuse exists in families. The victims of emotional abuse cannot be fewer or less than the victims of physical or sexual abuse. H. Astor also sees emotional abuse including verbal abuse, criticism and public and private ridicule. Attacks on a woman's self respect, her appearance, her character and questioning of her mental well being erode her image of herself and her sense of being capable.<sup>58</sup> Gelles and Straus raise an important point here. They assert that one of the reasons as to why there is so little research on emotional abuse, is that so many of us are guilty of occasional or even frequent emotional attacks on loved ones, that the behaviour is too close and too common to allow for objective research.<sup>59</sup>

### **2.3.3. ECONOMIC ABUSE**

According to the study conducted by Women and Law in Southern Africa Research and Educational Trust, their outcomes reveal that economic circumstances were also found to result in

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<sup>56</sup> See Sylvia Viljoen, Theme 4 'Violence within the family, Family structure and support networks: situating the theme theoretically and empirically within the South African context' Pretoria, Unpublished paper 1994:12.

<sup>57</sup> See Gelles and Straus, *Intimate Violence The Causes and Consequences of Abuse in the American Family*. 1998:59, Also see Shahana Rasool, Kerry Vermaak, Robyn Pharoah, 'Violence Against Women, A National Survey' 2002:35

<sup>58</sup> See Hilary Astor, 'National Committee on Violence against Women, Position paper on Mediation.' 1991:13.

<sup>59</sup> See Gelles and Straus 1998:67.



conflicts that could lead to domestic violence in a given house hold.<sup>60</sup> On the other hand Shahama Rasool, Kerry Vermaak, Robyn Pharaoh argue that economic abuse is the control of resources and not the vulnerability of women who are financially dependent on other persons controlling the household income.<sup>61</sup> However, even those women who earn an income have their money taken from them. This simply means that earning an income does not necessarily mean that they are free from abuse. A survey undertaken by Rasool, Vermaak and Pharaoh reveals that, of the women who had experienced economic abuse, the most common incident was having money taken from their purses without their consent. The table below clearly illustrates this.

### **Types of economic abuse experienced by women**

#### **Adopted from a National Survey**

<b>Type of economic abuse</b>	<b>%</b>
Money taken from purse	38.9 %
Prevented from knowing about/having access to family money	35.2%
Forced to be main breadwinner	32.2 5
Forced to hand over money	32.0 %
Forced to ask money for others for food, clothing	26.3%
Prevented from earning an income	24.8%
Money withdrawn from bank account	11.4 %
Money overdrawn from bank account	7.8 %

The table depicts what is happening to some women in families almost everyday – it clearly illustrates that economic abuse is experienced. This form of abuse is one of the hidden problems and it places women in an untenable situation.

## **2.4. INTERNATIONAL PERSPECTIVES ON FAMILY VIOLENCE**

Different scholars and researchers have proved that family violence does not only affect certain areas, but the whole world. This section will examine how the international world is affected by family violence and how the international world understands the concept of family violence.

<sup>60</sup> See Moitse.S, Mkhonta. F, Vilakati J, *Multiple Jeopardy Domestic Violence and Women’s search for Justice in Swaziland*, by Women and Law in Southern Africa Research and Educational Trust, Swaziland 2000:88.

<sup>61</sup> See Rasool, Vermaak, Pharaoh ‘Violence Against Women: A National Survey’ 2002:34.

Gelles and Cornell argue that, “those concerned with child abuse, wife abuse and family violence have tended to assume that the problem is greater in the United States than in other countries”.<sup>62</sup> They see this as a generalization caused by some social scientists and much of the general public and media. Due to the growth in attention to family violence by researchers and the general public, it is clear that family violence is not rare. Also, it is not confined to mentally ill or socially marginalized families. This means that family violence is found in normal families, in the homes of professionals as well as in the homes of ordinary people.

R.J. Gelles and C.P. Cornell claim that “a reverse–ethnocentric view of U.S. family violence is unintentionally supported by socio-cultural explanations of family violence that include as central variables cultural attitudes about violence as expressive and instrumental acts”.<sup>63</sup> Journalists report about family violence and researchers find that powerful norms accept the existence of both societal and family violence in the U.S. It will be incorrect to assume that other countries have little or no family violence because there are no scholarly discussions of violence or journalistic discussions in those cultures; than it would be to assume that before the rise of public concern for violence in U.S. families, U.S. households were non-violent.

A New York researcher clearly shows the findings of the investigation of family violence in the United States.<sup>64</sup> He writes that battering is the major cause of injury to women in the United States. Husbands or boyfriends beat more wives and girlfriends respectively, than women hurt in car accidents, rapes and muggings combined. This article further exposes the extent of family violence by giving those statistics that in 1994, more than one million children were abused, while in 1997 more than 2 million elders were abused, often by family members and relatives. In 1998, 2 000 children died as a result of abuse. The research reveals that only one in every 14 cases were reported.

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<sup>62</sup> See Gelles and Cornell, *International perspectives on Family Violence*, D.C. Heath and Company Publishers, Lexington Books, Toronto, 1983:1. Also see the work of two Australian sociologists and researchers who have done an extensive work on the subject from an international perspective i.e. Sandy Cook, Judith Bessant, *Women’s Encounter with Violence Australian Experiences* Sage Publications 1997. See also Vernon R. Wiehe, *Understanding Family Violence, Treating and Preventing Partner, Child, Sibling, and Elder abuse*, Sage Publication, 1998.

<sup>63</sup> See Gelles and Cornell 1983:1.

<sup>64</sup> See Christopher News Note #419, ‘The Faces and facts of family violence’ New York, [www.christphres.org](http://www.christphres.org). (2004:1). Christophers is a non-profit organization founded in 1945. The Christophers use media to spread the beliefs that: there is nobody like you and you who can make a difference. This message is based on the concept of service to God and all humanity; it is addressed to people of all faiths and of n particular faith.

The understanding and knowledge of family violence varies between societies. This depends on the political, social, economic and cultural milieu of the country. In defining abuse and violence, the central problem of research on family violence in the United States is the range and diversity of definitions of child abuse, spouse abuse, and violence.<sup>65</sup> Scholars like Gelles and Cornell have a problem in defining family violence because the terms *abuse* and *violence* are not conceptually equivalent. They both argue that in some instances, abuse refers to a subset of violent behaviour which results in injury to the victim.

Other definitions of child and wife abuse refer to mistreatment, including, but extending far beyond injurious violence. According to Gelles and Cornell the central definition of the problem with wife abuse is specifying acts of physical violence which are considered abusive. This clearly means that while definitions of violence include all forms of physical aggression, the definition of abuse ranges from physical aggression to a wide gamut of non-physical maltreatment.

Isabel Marcus attempts to formulate her own definition of domestic or family violence. She asks some of the following questions: “What terms and categories do we use when talking about violence? What name do we assign to it? What cultural baggage does the particular designation carry?”<sup>66</sup> She further makes a claim that when we talk about violence we do not utilize the term stronger violence and domestic violence as parallel terms. In her definition she separates stronger violence from violence abuse which occurs between partners or in a family, by modifying and characterizing it with the status relationship “domestic.”<sup>67</sup> For her the unmodified term ‘violence’, is applied to situations not involving intimates. Domestic modifies and specifically locates violence as to where it happens.

## **2.5. THE NATIONAL PERSPECTIVE OF FAMILY VIOLENCE**

In order to ascertain the extent of family violence in the South African context, the Human Rights Watch documents will be used as a major source, as well as the information from other institutions or organizations dealing with the cases of family violence. The criminal justice reports as well as the national government reports on gender issues, with special reference to family violence will also be consulted.

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<sup>65</sup> See Gelles and Cornell 1983:4.

<sup>66</sup> See Isabel Macus , 1994:25

<sup>67</sup> Ibid.

According to the Human Rights Watch there are no reliable statistics on the number of violent attacks on women in South Africa.<sup>68</sup> The figures that are given are extraordinarily high and they are certainly a small percentage of what is happening. The cases of family violence and abuse are most seriously under-reported. When we look at rape, it is concluded that it is reported in only a small minority of cases. Even though these cases of assault are reported to the police, they cannot distinguish between these and complaints of general assaults.

South African women of all races and income levels face abuse from their partners. The police statistics do not differentiate between domestic violence cases and other assaults and there has been no systematic, nationwide survey carried out to assess the extent of domestic violence. This makes it very difficult to precisely quantify it. The only attempt has been made by organizations in South Africa working with battered women and the estimate comes from their caseload and surveys.

A research survey conducted by different organizations working on domestic violence around South Africa, as reported by the Human Rights Watch reflects this:

“Rape Crisis estimated in 1992, that one in every three women was assaulted by her male partner. The Women’s Bureau estimates that her partner abuses approximately one in four women. The Advice Desk for Abused Women estimates that one in every six women is regularly assaulted by her partner and that at least one in four women are forced to flee at some time because of a life-threatening situation in their home. The organizations People Opposing Women Abuse (POWA) and Co-ordinate Actions for Battered Women also estimate that her partner abuses one in six women. Research carried out in Soweto in 1994 found that her husband or boyfriend had battered one in three women attending a clinic for any reason at some time. A recent survey conducted by the government-funded Human Sciences Research Council, found that 43 percent of 159 married women surveyed in Cape Town metropolitan area had been subjected to marital assault. Thirty-eight percent of women responding to a questionnaire issued by the Women’s National Coalition reported that they knew of a woman who had been battered”.<sup>69</sup>

The difficulty in determining the exact extent of the problem of domestic violence is increased by the fact that most women abused by their partners do not seek help outside of an informal

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<sup>68</sup> Human Rights Watch *Violence Against Women in South Africa, State’s response to violence against women*, Human Rights watch/Africa Human Rights Watch Women’s Project, New York. 2004:1, Human Rights Watch division was established in 1988 to monitor and promote the observance of internationally recognized human rights in sub-Saharan Africa. And the Human Rights Watch Women’s project was established in 1990 to monitor violence against women and gender discrimination throughout the world.

<sup>69</sup> See Human Rights Watch *Violence Against Women in South Africa, State’s response to violence against women*, 1995:45

network of family and friends. Some of the reasons for most women being reluctant to report abuse to police and legal and social services arise from their negative experience with police. There is an inadequate legal system for dealing with domestic violence and the social services are fragmented. Battered women often want only the abuse to end, not the relationship. They are reluctant to have recourse to official channels of redress, which often increase the likelihood of estrangement.

The types of abuse which South African women face in the home are the same as those faced by women all over the world. They include verbal abuse, in which they are humiliated and degraded verbally by their partners, emotional abuse in which they are threatened with violence, economic deprivation or withholding of access to their children and physical violence which takes many forms, ranging from restrictions on freedom of movement, to hitting, burning, stabbing and even the use of electric shocks. In the worst cases violence against women by their partners results in death. South African Criminal Law does not recognize specific crimes of wife or partner beating or of domestic violence mere generally. Women therefore have to lay common law charges of assault suffered at the hands of their partners or husbands. It is clear that in most cases no man is arrested in such circumstances. Police prefer to mediate in such cases of domestic violence. Even when the police are sensitized to the issue of domestic violence, they may prefer a conciliatory approach to an interventionist strategy.

## **2.6. LOCAL PERSPECTIVE OF FAMILY VIOLENCE**

In this chapter the nature and extent of domestic violence in the Western Cape – with specific reference to African Communities – will be discussed. Quantitative as well as qualitative data will be used. The quantitative data will give an idea of the extent of the problem in the Western Cape while the qualitative data will give a more in-depth look at the nature of family violence – especially towards women.

### **2.6.1. THE EXTENT OF FAMILY VIOLENCE**

This section is looking at how pervasive family violence is, currently, in various African communities in the Western Cape. To serve as evidence of what is actually happening, the statistics will focus on the whole Province of the Western Cape, the City of Cape Town and townships. The information from the Institute of Criminology (University of Cape Town),

information from the South Africa Police Services (SAPS) and a community based organization called Ilitha Labantu will be employed.. The statistics might not accurately reflect the extent of family violence for the same reasons already mentioned, that most cases are not reported. Some are not recorded because some police, if they are reported to a police station, cannot differentiate between a complaint and a charge. Most of the time they will refer the case of the family to be treated as a family matter. They will claim that domestic violence is a domestic matter.

As the first source of evidence, the information of statistics for family violence as they are reflected in the First Research Report 2000-2001 will be used<sup>70</sup>. This report is based on research conducted by the Consortium on Violence against Women. The consortium is composed of the: Institute of Criminology, University of Cape Town, Gender Project, Community Law Centre, University of the Western Cape and Rape Crisis.

The sketch below reflects the amount of domestic violence and the number of people applying for affidavits. It is striking when looking at the cases of physical abuse dealt with in the Cape Town Courts; 111 applicants noted physical abuse in their affidavits. However, only 47 applications requested protection from physical abuse in terms of a protection order. In Mitchell's Plain, of the 184 cases in which physical abuse was noted in the affidavits, only 159 sought protection against physical abuse. In George, of the 120 cases where physical abuse was noted in the affidavits, only 18 noted in terms of the protection order. When one takes into consideration that those who noted physical abuse might not have noted this in their affidavits, this is of particular concern.

#### **2. 6. 1. 1. THE INTERVIEWS OF VICTIMS OF FAMILY VIOLENCE**

Structured interviews were conducted with battered women who know and have experienced family violence. Although the stories may now be familiar, they still remain both painful and powerful. Women's accounts reveal the nature of men's violence and the sources of conflict leading to attacks. The nature of the abuse ranged from slapping and shoving to brutal assaults and sometimes murder. They also describe women's emotions and reactions as well as the inaction of social and legal institutions. Interviews were conducted with four African women. The same questions were used for all participants.

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<sup>70</sup> See Artz. L. *Monitoring the Implementation of the Domestic Violence*, Institute of Criminology, Cape Town, 2001:32-34.

### 2.6.1.2. A PROFILE OF THE INTERVIEWED WOMEN

The women interviewed shared common experiences of family violence and pain. They were all living in townships in the Cape Town area – Langa, Nyanga, Gugulethu and Khayelitsha. They were all married and still in their abusive relationships. Their names are not used in this report for their protection. Two of the four are unemployed and the other two are employed. One of the four women is a professional teacher. Their standard of education is not the same. In terms of age, the eldest was 39, 37, 26, and 23. The table below clearly explains their profile.

Place	Age Group	Marital status	No. of children	Education level	Employment	Abuse suffered	Abuse Reported
Nyanga	26	Married	Two	Grade 10	No	4yrs	No
Gugulethu	39	Divorced	Three	Grade 12	Yes	12yrs	No
Langa	37	Married	Three	Teacher	Yes	15yrs	No
Khayelitsha	23	Married	One	Studying	No	2yrs	No

### 2.6.1.3. TRUE STORIES DERIVED FROM THE INTERVIEWS

*Question: How do you define family violence?*

(This was a general answer for the first two questions from all the women interviewed.)

**Answer:** It occurs when a male partner violates women’s human rights, most of the time by means of physical abuse.

*Question: Do you think this is what is happening in all families?*

**Answer:** Most families experience domestic violence, but most prefer not to speak out about it for various reasons.

*Question: What happens when the woman is physically abused?*

**First women:** “I will first tell you from my own experience. “I have had glasses thrown at me. I have been kicked in the abdomen when I was visibly pregnant. I have been kicked off the bed and hit while lying on the floor, while I was pregnant. I have been kicked, whipped and thrown

around, picked up again and thrown down again. I have been punched and kicked in the head, chest, face and abdomen more times than I can count.” (Gugulethu woman)

**Second woman:** “I was punched and he banged my head on the walls. [He kicked] me everywhere.” (Nyanga woman)

**Third woman:** “He tried to strangle me one night. I was terrified. I managed to get out of the house, but I had to go back the next morning.” [Langa woman]

**Fourth woman:** “He banged my head against the wall or floor. I finally left him when I thought he was trying to kill me.” (Khayelitsha woman)

The injuries inflicted during these attacks range from cuts and bruises to broken bones, miscarriages and permanent damage. Again, women from different communities recount similar incidents and report a full range of injuries —

“I was not badly hurt. My ear was bruised and my hair was pulled out. After being punched, I had my nose broken and ribs broken. He dragged me out of bed by the hair and pulled me along the ground. I had treatment for a fractured skull and I lost a child through a miscarriage owing to violence.”

**Question:** *What are the effects of domestic violence?*

**Answer:** The effect upon women’s physical and emotional state is frequently recorded. The worst aspects of the experience of battering are:

“I felt so ill and tired after the beatings, and so useless. I could not face people with the marks on my body.” (Woman from Nyanga)

“I was always terrified. My nerves were getting the better of me. He knew this and I think he loved this.” (Woman from Langa)

“The fear of not knowing what he would do – I feared for my life.” (Woman from Gugulethu)



“I remember the tensions of becoming aware that I had to watch what I was saying all the time to make sure I did not offend him. I had become afraid of him.” (Woman from Khayelitsha)

**Question:** *What could be the cause of this violence?*

**Answer:** The source of conflict leading to violence tells a great deal about the nature of relations between men and women. These are the demands and expectations of wives, the prerogatives and power of a husband and cultural beliefs that support the individual’s attitude to marital inequality.

“I realized I was under terrible strain the whole time... Talking about her experience and the reason why she was beaten. “I had a poker thrown at me just because his tea was too weak. He just takes it for granted if you are married you will have to accept it. It is part of being a wife.”

“And then he had his belt and I was whipped over the shoulders everywhere, on my face and everything. And this was to teach me not to argue with him.”

“He would stay out all night and become violent if or when I questioned him.”

**Question:** *Do you speak about this?*

**Answer:** “I hid what was happening to me from everyone. I made excuses for my bruises and marks. I thought I should put up with it ... accept my hurt as being part of marriage...I wanted to keep it hidden.” (Woman from Nyanga)

It should be noted that some women did report the violence to the police because they hoped that this would prevent further incidents. The problem of women’s reluctance to report men’s violence as mentioned in previous pages is often exacerbated by social, medical and legal institutions, whose actions reveal a powerful legacy of policies and practice that explicitly or implicitly, accept or ignore male violence or blame the victim and make her responsible for its solution.

**Question:** *Why do abused women think about escaping violence?*

**Answer:** Some abused women think about escaping violence by killing their male abuser or themselves, and some actually do so. This is one of the responses:

“And we had this great big carving knife downstairs and I used to go upstairs and stand there with it and think that if I stick it in him – will I get charged with murder?” (Woman from Langa)

*Question: Why do women not want to leave their abusive partners?*

Answer: There are two common reasons given. Sometimes they think about their children. There is also a question of shelter if they leave, where will they stay? Again, they always think of financial support for the family. In most families in African Communities and other communities, men are the breadwinners. These above mentioned statements put men in an advantageous situation.

“But there was always my son to consider, I used to think if I leave (my son) with him what’s he going to grow up like – twisted like his father.” [Woman from Khayelitsha]

#### **2. 6.1. 4. STORIES AS TRUE REFLECTION**

##### **STORY No. 1**

The study of sexual harassment on the Cape Town University Campus, for example, reported the testimony of a white woman living in residence abused by her partner —

“He was a respected and prominent member of a religious organization on Campus and lived in a nearby residence. A woman who was a victim of violence narrating her story of being abused by her husband who was a Religious instructor that she was beaten. The reason why she was beaten was that she was provoking her husband<sup>71</sup>.

##### **STORY No. 2**

“My husband has always abused me. He has a drug and alcohol problem. I stayed because I am Catholic and because we have six children, until he kicked me out. He used to tie me to the bed so I could not go out. I was not allowed to answer the telephone. One time he beat me so bad, he cracked my head and broke one of my fingers. Another time, he burned me with boiling water. Once he put an electric shock through my fingers. I got a peace order against my husband while I was married, but when they came to the house, police said all they could do was warn my husband. Since my divorce four years ago, my

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<sup>71</sup> See Human Rights Watch 1995:48

husband harasses me all the time. He follows me. He steals my children's clothes and mine from the line. He comes around the house in the middle of the night. The police arrested him for trespassing three times, but he was immediately released. The police told me that they could not do anything more since we were divorced<sup>72</sup>.

In January 1995, I went to get an interdict and the court clerk told me that they could not give me one because everybody's free to walk the streets and live their lives. Soon after, he threw a burning towel through the window of the house which burnt the curtains and started a fire. Now he is in prison for two months for damaging property.

### **STORY No. 3**

This is a story which was discussed on a TV programme called "Masikhulume" (meaning Let's talk) in April 2003

The lady was married for a long time. She claims that she never enjoyed her marriage because she suffered abuse almost everyday. She felt that she was treated badly by her husband. As her response and reaction to the situation she decided to fight for her rights. She reported the case to both the police and her husband's family. Nothing was done to protect her. The police just referred the case back to her family stating that it was a domestic matter. One day her husband came back home drunk, as usual, and he tried to physically abuse the wife. The wife fought back. She took a knife and stabbed him. Unintentionally, she killed him due to heavy bleeding as a result of the stab wound. The woman was arrested and charged for murder.

All three stories confirm that we have a serious problem and something needs to be done about it. If one looks very closely at these stories one will find that a person's human rights are being violated. Unfortunately, it is always the same gender that is being harmed. Women are always victims through abuse and again, victims of the circumstance because there is nothing done about perpetrators. Having looked at these testimonies it is very sad for me to observe that both the church representative and the state representative failed to deal with the matter. The state representative could not see the problem of family violence. Instead the man or perpetrator was charged for something else. Nothing was done to assist the victim.

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<sup>72</sup> Ibid.

In the light of the above statements, it is clear that there is a problem – family violence. In South Africa, as in many other countries, when it comes to male abuse of women, the family have been viewed as a private entity. Assault or sexual assault of women has been treated as a criminal matter only when committed by a stranger against an obviously virtuous woman

### **2. 6.1. 5. BEGINNING TO INTERPRET THE STORIES**

The stories reveal that there is a serious problem within our families and communities. Although the different women that were interviewed are from different townships, different ages, different education levels and different economic backgrounds, they share the same experience of family violence. Even though these women were having difficult times, they were reluctant to leave their homes for some reasons they expressed. Once again, one will notice that these women do not talk about their experiences. There is a culture of silence and this silence is killing them, it is not helping them at all. Instead they go through a cycle of violence everyday. These women need help but no one is prepared to help, though their society and know what is happening to them. This brings us to the next step which Maluleke and Nadar call a '*Covenant of Death, Voices in the Wilderness*'.<sup>73</sup>

Maluleke and Nadar begin by defining the term covenant “as a word that is usually reserved for the extraordinary love contract that God initiates with unworthy human beings – binding them to God and vice versa, in a resilient, powerful and committed relationship”.<sup>74</sup> The point that they are raising here is that there is an unwritten covenant with violence and silence and this often includes pastors, church elders, siblings and parents. They make a claim that their participation in this covenant often manifests in the advice and counsel they give to women victims. telling them that it is their fault that they were beaten and advising them that ‘the Bible says’ that they must be submissive; telling them they are the ones who needs counselling and that marriage is like that.<sup>75</sup> They say that those who want to speak about it and prefer to stand against this covenant of death and violence should know that it is too costly. It may result in isolation and rejection, even by members of the family and those who stand up against the covenant are often like voices in the wilderness.

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<sup>73</sup> See Maluleke and Nadar ‘Breaking the Covenant of Violence against Women’. In special issue: *Overcoming Violence against Women*, (eds.) J.R. and De Gruchy S, 2002:7.

<sup>74</sup> See Maluleke and Nadar, 2002:7.

<sup>75</sup> Ibid

## 2. 6. 2. QUANTITY OF FAMILY VIOLENCE – STATISTICS

This section on the quantity of family violence will show the amount violence within the families. This will be done in terms of the reported statistics, the information on the affidavits and the request made in each category of abuse. With regards to statistics the information from the police will be used, as well as the information received from the local organization that deals with abuse against women and children. This information will be helpful in terms of measuring the extent of family violence.

### COMPARISON OF ABUSES NOTED IN AFFIDAVIT’S WITH THE NUMBER OF REQUESTS MADE IN EACH CATEGORY OF ABUSE.

TYPE OF ABUSE NOTED	CAPE TOWN N=170		MITCHELL’SPLAI N=279		GEORGE N= 167	
	Affidavit	Request in 7h	Affidavit	Request in 7h	Affidavit	Request in 7h
Physical	111	47	184	159	120	18
Sexual	19	3	20	2	7	3
Emotional/Verbal/Psychological	137	90	251	240	132	87
Economic	92	3	45	10	35	7
Intimidation	92	22	81	76	9	3
Harassment	15	7	21	57	6	3
Stalking	7	4	11	19	4	5
Damage to Property	42	4	45	22	33	12
Entry without Consent	9	1	9	11	13	1
Other	121	*	63	*	10	*

\* Data was not collected regarding the number of requests made for behaviour that would fall into the category of “Other”.

Figure 2 below, shows the frequency of urgency noted in applications by magisterial district. According to the research report of the 616 files analyzed, 440 noted urgency in their application for protection orders. Cape Town and George showed very high percentages (90% and 92, 8%), respectively, of requests for urgent applications. See figure.2.

**FIGURE 2 FREQUENCY OF URGENCY NOTED IN APPLICATION BY  
MAGISTERIAL DISTRICT**

	<b>CAPE TOWN N=170</b>	<b>MITCHELL'S PLAIN N= 279</b>	<b>GEORGE N=167</b>	<b>Cumulative percentage</b>
Application where urgency was noted	<b>153</b>	<b>132</b>	<b>155</b>	<b>71.43%</b>
Percentage of cases mentioning urgency per district	<b>90.0%</b>	<b>47.3%</b>	<b>92.8%</b>	

RESEARCH REPORT 2001: BY THE CONSORTIUM ON VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN.)<sup>76</sup>

- **THE POLICE STATISTICS' REPORT**

Family violence cases were reported to the Western Cape police stations. The statistics are from the period January 2003 –April 2006.<sup>77</sup> The statistics breakdown is not done properly as I have indicated before that some are treated as assault cases.

<i>Domestic Violence</i>	=	<i>22743</i>
<i>Child Abuse</i>	=	<i>12591</i>
<i>Rape</i>	=	<i>6519</i>

Statistics are not 100% available as to criminal prosecutions of domestic violence because police do not keep separate statistics for assault. There is a belief that charges are withdrawn in domestic assault cases, for more often an assault takes place between strangers.

Statistics that are presented below are from an organization called Ilitha Labantu. Ilitha Labantu is a community-based organization dealing with domestic violence against women and child abuse cases. Ilitha Labantu offers its services to African communities in areas such as Gugulethu,

<sup>76</sup> See Artz, 2001:34.

<sup>77</sup> It must be noted that the statistics might have changed from the time this data was collected.

Langa, Nyanga, Crossroads, Philippi and Khayelitsha. It offers counselling to abused women and sexually abused children. These statistics are of the reported cases for the year 2004.

- **LOCAL COMMUNITY ORGANIZATION STATISTIC 2006**

MONTH	FORMS OF ABUSE					
	Marriage	Rape/ sodomy	Neglect	Maintenance	HIV/AIDS	Others
<b>JANUARY</b>	195	96	77	107	22	75
<b>FEBRUARY</b>	195	60	79	131	34	99
<b>MARCH</b>	227	41	98	141	25	104
<b>APRIL</b>	257	57	91	157	19	75
<b>MAY</b>	272	66	95	184	11	93
<b>JUNE</b>	285	84	99	192	38	88
<b>SUB-TOTAL</b>	1457	404				
<b>GRAND-TOTAL</b>	<b>2995</b>					
<b>JULY</b>	298	139	96	87	50	115
<b>AUGUST</b>	304	131	74	68	47	99
<b>SEPTEMBER</b>	322	147	89	73	39	120
<b>OCTOBER</b>	335	117	98	67	46	132
<b>NOVEMBER</b>	349	138	87	62	39	137
<b>DECEMBER</b>	288	198	92	78	43	127
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>2037</b>	<b>870</b>	<b>518</b>	<b>435</b>	<b>293</b>	<b>739</b>
<b>ANNUAL STATISTICS</b>	<b>7867</b>					

When working with quantitative data one must always be aware of the shortcoming thereof.

Although quantitative data is hard evidence of the situation, there are always those cases which are never reported.

## 2. 7. THEORIES FOR NOT REPORTING THE CASES

A woman's response to abuse is often limited by the options available to her. Damon. E. argues that some abused women are not passive victims but use active strategies to maximize their safety and that of their children.<sup>78</sup> This means that they are not concerned about what is happening in their lives but they are worried about their children. In many instances, many women do not immediately report cases of abuse because they fear being disbelieved. Some do tell the stories of their experiences of abuse when it does not fit stereotypical perceptions of what constitutes abuse.<sup>79</sup>

Damon further argues that according to Heise (1999) assault is often a process of denial, self-blame and endurance. Another problem affecting our knowledge of the exact extent of the problem of family violence is due to the fact that most women, who are abused by their partners, do not seek help outside an informal network of their friends and family.<sup>80</sup>

He raises three possible theories for women not to report the cases of family violence and any kind of abuse against them as follows: fear of stigmatization, fear of reprisal from their partner fear of being killed <sup>81</sup> All three reasons will be investigated and tested as to why women are concerned about others instead of their safety. Economic dependency will be added to these theories.

- **Fear of stigma**

This is one of the tools that people usually use to dehumanize others. They make them feel bad about their situations, whether they were abused, raped, or HIV positive because once people know about these abuses, the abused does not feel comfortable. That fear of social stigmatization often prevents women from speaking out and laying a charge against their partners for their abuse. Many abusers are respected and well known in the community and this contributes to the silence of some women, because they think that no one will believe what they are saying. The community must be blamed for this kind of behaviour because it is also kills the morale of the

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<sup>78</sup> See Damon E, *Factors underlying Women's decision not to report physical abuse: A qualitative exploration*. Unpublished Masters thesis, Stellenbosch, University of Stellenbosch, 2003:13.

<sup>79</sup> Ibid.

<sup>80</sup> Ibid

<sup>81</sup> Ibid. see, 17. He gathered these statistics from ISS Monograph Series no 41, 1999.



victims. It is also surprising to notice that sometimes women are the ones that are stigmatizing other women instead of being in solidarity with them.

- **Fear of reprisal from partner**

Damon's position on this, is that it has been estimated that as many as 41% of abused women worldwide, have never told anyone about the abuse. This culture of silence has long been a problem all over the world. Damon reports that a study which was conducted by Heinse in 1999 in the United States of America discovered that from 22 % to almost 70 % of abused women admitted that they never told anyone that they are abused at home. The fear of reprisal from their partners is another reason why abused women remain silent. This silences women to be silent in an effort to avoid worsening violence and abuse at home.

- **. Fear of being killed**

This is the third reason that Damon raises in his investigation. According to Mac Call (1993), death is, of course, the most serious outcome of violence. Damon stresses the fact that leaving an abusive relationship does not guarantee an abused woman's safety,<sup>82</sup> and Campbell (1995), contends that there is a very high risk that her partner will kill a woman after she has reported the case. McCall argues in support of and confirms that women are more than twice as likely as men to be killed by their spouses.

- **Economic dependency**

It is very common among Africans that women depend on their husbands financially. In former times it was a tradition or a custom that women were not encouraged or expected to work. It was the duty of a man to provide for the home. Though today some women are liberated from that kind of culture of the economic dependency of women, they still find themselves trapped in abusive and destructive relationships or marriages.

Artz affirms this by stating that in rural South African Areas, four in every five women are financially dependent on their partners, have no employment and no income of their own.<sup>83</sup>

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<sup>82</sup> Ibid

<sup>83</sup> See Art.2001:34.

Because men earn much more than women and are breadwinners, they believe that their use of violence is justified.

We now have a good idea of what the extent of the problem is in the Western Cape. Even if the statistics do not portray the entire picture, one still has a good idea of the problem and its potential influence on communities. However one still lacks the story behind these statistics – the story of the victims. The stories of how the victims feel about the situation in which they find themselves, why they are in this situation and what they do to get out of it.

## **2. 8. CONCLUSION**

This chapter was an attempt to understand the concept, and investigate the nature and extent of family violence, not only in the African communities but also in a broader spectrum e.g. internationally, nationally and locally. The chapter also gave an understanding of the different forms of family violence with its categories. The statistics provided reflected the magnitude of family violence in our homes. It also tried to understand the reasons for some women not reporting the violence that they were experiencing.

It is hoped that with all this information, the church will be challenged to see, accept and be able to take ownership of the situation as its problem and deal with it. As explained earlier on, seeing refers to the fact that there is a challenge that needs some attention. This could also mean providing spectacles to see things differently. This section has helped to understand that family violence is a problem not only for the community but also for the church. It highlighted the notion of identifying the problem that is not yet resolved. This process has not only exposed the church to see and identify the problem, but it actually challenged the church to accept it as its own problem. This means that if the church has accepted this challenge of family violence it will be in the position to take a collective decision to respond.

The next chapter will deal with the causes and complicating factors of family violence affecting women and the family as a whole, following Tödt's second step of ethical decision-making. This step will help to have a deeper insight into the actual causes of family violence and how the church can respond from a well-informed background.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **CAUSES AND COMPLICATING FACTORS**

#### **3.1. INTRODUCTION**

The previous chapter followed the first step of Tödt's theories of ethical decision-making which is summarized as "seeing, accepting and describing the problem". The chapter investigated the nature and the extent of family violence not only in the African communities, but dealt with the problem of family violence as it is recorded in other communities around the world. It attempted to give a broader analysis of the situation by looking at different forms of family violence, statistics as well as the reasons for women not reporting their experiences.

This chapter will attempt to outline and investigate the causes and complicating factors of family violence. It is hoped that the findings of this chapter on the subject outlined, will assist the church to see how these causes can be addressed so that the church can organize programmes that can contribute towards the eradication of family violence. This chapter will also make use of Tödt's second step on decision-making. It shall focus primarily on the need for the analysis of the situation so that one is able to see, accept and describe the problem.

This chapter will be divided into two parts, the first will be looking at the causes of family violence (3.2.) and the second will investigate the complicating factors of family violence (3.3.) The main focus will not be on the complicating factors but rather on what causes family violence, in order to be able to address those causes. The section on causes will pay attention to four possible factors i.e. social causes (3.2.1), economic causes (3.2.2), legal causes (3.2.3) and political causes (3.2.4.) The second part of the chapter will focus primarily on the complicating factors of family violence (3.3). It will chiefly deal with three issues i.e. the physical impact (3.3.1), the psychological impact (3.3.2) and the social impact (3.3.3).

#### **3. 2. CAUSES OF FAMILY VIOLENCE**

This section will investigate four different types of contributing factors namely: social causes (3.2.1), economic causes (3.2.2), legal causes (3.2.3) and political cause (3.2.4). The outcomes of this investigation will assist with a clear understanding of where family violence is derived from. Having completed this inquiry, the information gathered will pave the way towards a well-

informed attempt for a response, in terms of reducing and making a contribution towards ending this type of violence.

### **3.2.1. SOCIAL CAUSES**

Under this heading there are two major issues that are seen as contributing factors to the social causes of family violence and will be discussed in detail.<sup>84</sup> They are as follows: alcohol abuse and exposure to drugs, (3.2.1.1.) unholy trinity (3.2.1.2.1.) socialization, (3.2.1.2.2) culture and (3.2.1.2.3.) religion. Maluleke combines the last three social causes and calls them the unholy trinity. This term will be employed in this chapter to describe the last three causes namely socialization, culture and religion.<sup>85</sup> It is assumed that the discussion of these social causes will help to give a clear understanding into the background of family violence as well as deal with the question of its origin.

#### **3.2.1.1. ALCOHOL ABUSE AND EXPOSURE TO DRUGS**

These days, unlike in the past, people are exposed to alcohol and drugs more than ever. Therefore, this exposure leads to abuse of alcohol by a number of people, especially men. The issue here is not about drinking alcohol it is about how we drink and what kind of behaviour do we display after drinking. It will be interesting to see the end results of the abuse of alcohol and drugs as the investigation progresses. It has been proven and tested by some researchers that alcohol abuse and drug use, are one of the major contributing factors to family violence. According to the research conducted by Women and Law in Southern Africa Research and Educational Trust, it was revealed that alcohol consumption is the major cause for family violence.<sup>86</sup> Sakala also concurs with this claim, that excessive alcohol consumption by men has become a primary contributing factor to abusive behaviour.<sup>87</sup> Therefore, alcohol is the starting point of the trouble especially for those who are drinking. This can be seen from two different

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<sup>84</sup> It should be noted that these are not the only contributing factors. There could be many more that are not mentioned here. These are seen by the author as the major contributing factors that affect the family on daily basis.

<sup>85</sup> See Maluleke and Nadar 'Breaking the Covenant of Violence against Women' In special issue on 'Overcoming Violence Against Women and Children,' In Journal of Theology for Southern Africa, Issue 114 November, (eds.) Cochrane J.R. and de Gruschy, 2002:14.

<sup>86</sup> See Mary-Joyce Doo Alphane (eds.) 'Multiple Jeopardy: Domestic Violence and Women's Search for Justice in Swaziland' 2003: 92.

<sup>87</sup> See Felicia Sakala, 'Violence Against Women in Southern Africa' in *Gender in Southern Africa: A Gender perspective*, Sapes Books Harare 1998:29.

angles; firstly, from an economic view, because those who drink alcohol use the family's money to buy liquor and most of the time this is not negotiated with the family. Secondly, it can lead to physical abuse because abuse of alcohol and drugs leads to people becoming abusive in their homes.

Lisa, however, has a different opinion. She maintains that alcohol or substance abuse does not cause perpetrators of family violence to abuse their partners although it is frequently used as an excuse.<sup>88</sup> Her point of departure is that whilst alcohol and drugs do not cause violence, they do play a major role with abusive men. This may increase the frequency or severity of violent episodes in some cases.

Koss argues that the recognition of a link between violence against women and the use of alcohol is not something new. He further raises a point that many women supported the temperance in the United States during the 19<sup>th</sup> c because they believed excessive drinking contributed to wife abuse.<sup>89</sup> To support the above argument, that alcohol and drug abuse can be the possible contributing factor to family violence, the Research Unit of Religion and Theology of the University of Stellenbosch<sup>90</sup> conducted a study in the Western Cape during May and June 2004, on the places of influence. It tried to identify places where people's lives are being influenced. It was a privilege to be with the field workers who produced maps that demonstrated the conclusion that alcohol and drugs were one of the contributing factors of family violence in the African communities, especially Nyanga, Gugulethu, New Crossroads, Old Crossroads and other surrounding areas.

The maps in the appendix depict the areas where liquor and drugs are being sold. All those spotted areas reflect the number of places that are selling liquor and drugs. This means that if we have such a large number of areas that are selling liquor and drugs, there is no way that we can avoid family violence in our homes because that is where the people's lives are being influenced.

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<sup>88</sup> See Lisa Vetten, 'Papers Promises, Protests and Petitions South African State and Civil Society Response to Violence Against Women', in *Reclaiming Women's Space, New Perspectives on Violence against Women, Women and Sheltering in South Africa*. (Eds.) Yoon Jung Park, Joanne Fedler, Zubeda Dangar, Nissa Institute for Women's Department. 2000:32.

<sup>89</sup> See Koss M.P. *No Safe Haven Washington D.C.* 1994:15

<sup>90</sup> It is a Research Institute at the University of Stellenbosch working with the Faculty of Religion and Theology. The author of this research work participated in the investigation of the areas of influence, where peoples' lives are influenced. This projected tried to map all the areas of influence. The same maps are being used in this chapter to expose the extent of the use of liquor in the said communities. This looked at places like churches, places that sell drugs, and places that sell liquor.

This illustrates that most of the time men spend their time drinking alcohol, both married and unmarried men. It is clear that if they spend most of their time in those places that sell liquor, their thinking and their behaviour will be influenced by people in their surroundings. It will be difficult for their wives to enter into a discussion with them, reflecting on family issues because they will end up fighting. In the light of the above discussion, if this investigation comes to the conclusion that alcohol abuse and drug use is one aspect of the contributing factors, it means that the church needs to find a way to responding to this matter. This will help in avoiding the major consequences of alcohol abuse at home. Home must be a peaceful place and a safe place for all to be able to live in harmony.

The next issue to be discussed is the unholy trinity. This issue will also be discussed at length so that it becomes clear to the readers what is meant by it and how it contributes to family violence. This discussion will help the church with some insights of dealing with the challenge of family violence.

### **3.2.1.2. “THE UNHOLY TRINITY”<sup>91</sup>**

When dealing with the issue of the causes of family violence Maluleke and Nadar identify three factors that contribute to family violence. They refer to the ‘unholy trinity’ of gender socialization, culture and religion.<sup>92</sup> They call these ‘unholy’ because they are man-made, God never created a culture that oppresses women and religious images that depict male domination as well as the form of socialization that oppresses females.

The three aspects as possible contributing factors to the causes of family violence will be discussed separately. Under the subject ‘socialization’ the focus will be on the agents of socialization, e.g. family, peer-relationships, education, media, patriarchy and patrilocality. Secondly, it will look at culture and its contribution to family violence, with specific reference to the question of *ilibola* use. Thirdly, religion and how religion and religious images are used as a contributing factor to family violence.

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<sup>91</sup> This term is borrowed from Maluleke and Nadar’s article, ‘Breaking the Covenant of Violence against Women’.

<sup>92</sup> Ibid,14.

### 3.2.1.2.1. SOCIALIZATION

The question to be discussed is – what is socialization? How does socialization contribute to family violence? Louw defines the concept of socialization, as follows: “Socialization is the process whereby the individual becomes a member of a social group by learning to conform to the behaviour of the group”.<sup>93</sup> More specifically, through socialization the individual acquires knowledge of the rule, attitudes, beliefs, habits, values, role requirements and norms prevailing in the social environment and learns to accept the social norms as his/her own or at least to take them into consideration in his or her behaviour. This process is very similar to learning, in the sense that changes in the individual’s overt and covert behaviour occur because of external influences. The various kinds of learning explained above, therefore play an important role in the socialization process and sometimes it is not easy to distinguish between the two processes. In other words, socialization is a transformation from being male or female to being girls and boys and later women and men. It is a socially learned behaviour whereby an individual internalizes attitudes and adopts particular roles as instructed and influenced by society.

According to Damon, sociologically speaking, high rates of violence can be seen to be evidence of the fact that the normative order in society is no longer functioning successfully.<sup>94</sup> Because of socialization, the cycle of violence for women already starts in childhood and will be perpetuated in the lives of their daughters. Marcus argues that violence in the homes are usually characterized by the euphemistic terms, ‘keeping order and discipline in the home’.<sup>95</sup> Socialization is one of the contributing factors to family violence, because it makes us who we are.

If we look at gender as a social construct, gender identity consists of our socio-cultural and psychological make-ups as learnt through socialization into specific roles, behaviours, attitudes and expectations during our developmental stages. In short, males and females are born, but men and women are made. Being a man connotes power, strength prestige and all that is associated with priority. Being a woman connotes powerlessness, inferior status and a lesser claim to opportunities of leadership, influence and ownership. Maconachie, Angless and Van Zyl bring to our attention that the pervasiveness of battering indicates that it is not a crime sporadically

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<sup>93</sup> See Louw D.A. 1991:9, also see Parsons, T., Bales, R.F. *Family Socialization and interaction process*, Glencoe, III. Free Press 1955. See Murdock, G.P. *Social Structure*, New York, Macmillan, 1949.

<sup>94</sup> See Malcom Damon, *Factors underlying Women’s decision not to report physical abuse: A qualitative exploration*. Unpublished Masters thesis, Stellenbosch, University of Stellenbosch. 2003:18. He further refers us to Marais, S. 1998:1, *Violence in South Africa. Trauma Review*, Vol.6 No.2: 1-3.

<sup>95</sup> See Marcus, *The Public nature of Private Violence*, New York, Routledge. 1994

committed by an individual on another, but part of a socially institutionalized system of male control over women.<sup>96</sup>

- **AGENTS OF SOCIALISATION: -**

These can sometimes be called institutions, agents and processes of social construction. Social construction as mentioned before refers to the concept that gender roles and attributes are deliberately and systematically cultivated in females and males over a period of time. Gender is systematically constructed, maintained, justified and perpetuated according to the existing relational ideology. It is important for us to note the following words that are being emphasized in the framework of socialization, as follows:

- **Systematic** – because it is orderly and follows an ideological blueprint of what a woman or a man in a particular society should be.
- **Constructed** – because it is a deliberate action that combines various factors.
- **Maintained** – in the sense that there are structures in place to ensure its longevity.
- **Justified** – in that it can be always explained away.

Under this section there are seven examples of the agents of socialization that will be discussed: family, peer relationships, education, media, patriarchy and patrilocal, multiple partners, and workplace. All these examples of socialization will be discussed at length, to clearly show how they make a contribution towards family violence.

- **The Family**

It is important that when we deal with the family environment, we do not leave out the notion of *ikhaya* (home) because there can be no family without a home. This is where social construction of gender begins through various processes. Christine Stones calls this a subject of much debate. It has both attackers and defenders. This poses some fundamental questions, such as: “Is the family biologically determined or socially constructed? Should the family be a private haven or a focus of public concern? Is the family a universal and enduring institution or a feature of a

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<sup>96</sup> See Moira Maconachie, Teresa Angless, Mikki Van Zyl, *Battered Women Seeking Solutions, A Study of Women who have taken Refuge at the Rape Crisis Shelter in Cape Town*, Co-operative Research Program on Marriage and Family Life, HSRC. 1993:5



particular social order? Are there advantages of specific structures or patterns of family life”?<sup>97</sup> A simple, unambiguous and useful definition of the family is surprisingly difficult to achieve.

Morgan tackles the problem at the end of his enquiry into the family. He suggests that we understand that:

“The word ‘family’ has something to do with marriage and parenthood and that these two terms themselves have something to do with respectively, the relationships between adults and the relationships between adults and children; these two sets of relationships being focused on something that may be called a home or a household”<sup>98</sup>

The intention here is not to discuss this definition but rather raise the importance of linking together the notion of *ikhaya* (home) and *usapho* (family), when dealing with the family environment. If we do not link the two it will cause problems in understanding the family construction. If each is taken on its own, it will limit our understanding of family to one pattern of the family structure. *Ikhaya* is where *usapho* gathers together in happiness. It is a symbol of the unity of the family in the African context. Sandile Gxilishe has a beautiful definition of *ikhaya* (home) that represents the African understanding of *ikhaya*. He writes in Xhosa in his essays and he says this:

*“Kubantu aba Ntsundu kambe, ikhaya asizondonga zodwa, kuloko nabantu abahlala kuzo. Ngabantu abazalelwe kulo mzi, nabazalana nalo mzi, abakhoyo nabangekhoyo ngelo xesha. Ngamanye amazwizonke izalamane zalapho, ngabantu belokhaya. Ikhaya ke liyinto yonke kumninilo: yindawo enobushushu nothando, nomqolomba, ikhaka, iyeza kwakunye nembiza yokumpheka umntu avuthwe. Yindawo ezele bububele nothando. Yiyo nayiphi na indawo exabisekileyo emenza ubani athi nokuba sele kumnandi kangakanani na apho akhoyo, kodwa athi akukhumbula ikhaya, kuvuseleleke iingcinga ezihlwabisayo azive elikhumbula. Athi omnye umbhali izinto zintle kodwa hayi ikhaya. Uthi umntu seletshipile iminyaka, kodwa kusuke ngaminazana ithile, akukhumbul’ ikhaya nokuba sele eyimpula ka Lujaca agoduke.”*<sup>99</sup>

A literal translation of this definition is as follows:

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<sup>97</sup> See Christine Stones 1994:1.

<sup>98</sup> See Morgan 1985:269.

<sup>99</sup> Sandile Gxilishe is a lecturer at the University of Cape Town in the Department of Linguistics. He is an author of Xhosa books that are always prescribed by the Department of Education for school use. This extract is taken from one of his Xhosa Essays book called 'AMAVA' and the essay is 'Ikhaya' 1994:1

“With the African people, a home is not only a building but people who dwell inside as well as the relatives that are born there. In other words the relatives of that home are also members of that home. A home is everything to the head of the family. A home is a place full of love and happiness, a safe haven, a shield from dangerous spears, a place where a person is moulded until he or she is ready to face the world. It is a place full of love. It’s a respectable place which is a constant reminder to people with the tendencies of a prodigal son, is how happy his/her home is. When he or she thinks of home, his or her thoughts are revived and he or she remembers home.

One writer says about home. ‘Everything can be beautiful in life but nothing can be more than a home’. A person may stay away from home for many years but when his thoughts about home are revived, nothing can stop him or her from going home irrespective of his financial condition.”

According to McDowell, the term home is associated with safety, with familiar and protective boundaries, with the family, the exclusion of unwanted others, with privacy, a haven in a heartless world.<sup>100</sup> Paula Meth in a paper that she wrote, tries to assist the readers with another understanding of the concept of home, and her focus is on feminist and development theorist analyses of the concept.<sup>101</sup> Paula raises three assumptions about the home in relation to domestic violence i.e. (a) the home as a formal entity, (b) home as a private space, (c) the domicile as home.<sup>102</sup> The reason why Meth raises these three assumptions about home is that if we ignore these we might be raising the problem of homelessness, especially if we focus on one aspect of home. The issues raised in this section are not for discussion at this stage.

One wonders whether in the midst of family violence, child abuse, rape within marriage, battering, etc. at home, one can still regard home as a safe place to be, as a place of love as Gxilishe and others write. The author concurs that they are correct in suggesting that home is suppose to be a place of safety for everybody, but on the contrary, it must also be stated that for many this is not the case. This argument is raised because most family violence cases occur in arears that are otherwise considered to be safe, such as homes. The succeeding chapters will discuss some possible responses that are needed in terms of what could be done to our homes and

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<sup>100</sup> See McDowell, ed. *Undoing Place, A Geographical Reader*, Arnold, London. 1997:13.

<sup>101</sup> See Paula Meth, A paper on rethinking the ‘domus’ in domestic violence: homelessness, space and domestic violence in South Africa. This is available online at [www.sciencedirect.com](http://www.sciencedirect.com). 2003:2.

<sup>102</sup> Paula Meth 2003:2 Her arguments are supported by a number of feminist authors such as Johnston and Valentine, 1995; Watson and Austerberry, 1986, Domosh, 1998.

those who stay in those homes in order to restore that warmth and love that Gxilishe talks about. This becomes a challenge not only for the government but also for the church, in reminding the people in terms of understanding the concept of home and its responsibilities.

The church has to be involved in this process because its teaching and preaching is not only about information on the moral formation of a person, but also how this morality is practiced on a daily basis. The family plays a key role in instilling and enforcing behaviours. The cognitive processes are also informed by this instillation and in most cases it is an instillation that promotes violence against women.

According to Koss, a significant relationship between the sexual victimization of boys and subsequent sexual aggression as young men has been observed in a series of longitudinal investigations. Both boys and girls are at an increased risk of abuse by an intimate partner in later adult relationships if they were abused as children or adolescents.<sup>103</sup>

This takes us to the next aspect of the agents of socialization, namely peer relationships. Also it will give clarity on how peer relationships can influence others to acts of violence.

- **.Peer relationships**

Peer groups can be defined as the friends of children of a similar age. This becomes important for this discussion because in peer relationships there are many influence that take place. These influences can be good or bad. Vogelman and Eagle concurs with this argument, that ‘Peer-group socialization is also a powerful influence on sexually assault behaviour’.<sup>104</sup> In some cultures, particularly small traditional societies, peer groups are formalized as age-grades. Each generation has certain rights and responsibilities, and these alter, as its members grow older.

Peer relationships often remain important throughout a person’s life. Peer relationships are likely to have a significant impact beyond childhood and adolescence. These groups have the potential of shaping individuals’ attitudes and behaviour. They play a big role in socializing boys and girls into what “real boys and real girls” are. There is the idea of a soft boy being a mom’s boy and a strong girl being a tomboy.

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<sup>103</sup> See Koss. M.P. 1994:23.

<sup>104</sup> See Koss M.P. 1994:26.

The next agent to be discussed is education. This investigation will help one to see to what extent education influences children at school, with regard to socialization. This will also assist in understanding how education becomes the agent of socialization.

- **Education**

Schooling is a formal process and there is a definite curriculum of subjects studied. Yet, schools are agencies of socialization in more subtle respects too. Education reinforces societal ideas and values that are planted in the family. Lloyd Vogelman and Gillian Eagle argue that in relation to violence and abuse against women specifically, a few issues need to be raised. Schools and other educational institutions are considered to be places in which people not only acquire knowledge, but also learn to challenge and question undesirable social practices.<sup>105</sup>

However, within most such institutions the subject of women abuse is considered largely taboo and existing stereotypes are perpetuated. Since little or no formal instruction in relation to sexuality or gender relations is allowed to take place in schools, ignorance and stereotyping persists, violence and abuse against women continue across generations. According to Vogelman and Eagle much has been written concerning the gender bias inherent in most current education systems.<sup>106</sup>

There are factors at play in the school which instruct and maintain gender. The following were the findings of a group work discussion in Gugulethu, during a workshop on gender as a social construct<sup>107</sup>.

***Teachers:***

As role models and sources of information and instruction, teachers influence the construction of gender in a number of ways. The fact that women dominate in pre-school and lower primary

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<sup>105</sup> Vogelman and Eagle, 'Overcoming Endemic Violence against Women in South Africa', *Social Justice Vol.18* Nos. 1-2. 1991:219

<sup>106</sup> See Vogelman and Eagle, 1991:219, Also see Richardson. L.W., 1981, *The Dynamics of Sex and Gender Boston, Houghton Mifflin. Oakley..*

<sup>107</sup> This workshop was conducted by a local organization based in Gugulethu called Ilitha Labantu. Ilitha Labantu is an organization that responds to violence against women and children. The workshop was organized for the Ministers of Religion in the townships around the Western Cape. This workshop was held in October 2004.

school seems to be an extension of their biological roles as mothers. Male teachers' dominance in scientific subjects constructs in girls the belief that this is not their turf. The kind of verbal messages that teachers give girls or boys in terms of their performance can encourage or discourage their performance in specific subjects or as a whole.

***Textbooks:***

Images in textbooks stereotype the roles of men and women. For instance, accountants, doctors, engineers, shopkeepers and leaders are often depicted as men. Nurses and domestic helps are often depicted as female. This contributes to the belief of a life of inferiority and servitude for women. Other subtle biases in textbooks are:

- The number of times males and females appear in pictures and texts (males are more frequent)
- The order of the appearance in which they are mentioned (males first).
- The number of times they are mentioned by name and by pronoun (male tend to be mentioned by name more than females).
- The number of times generic pronouns are soon qualified with names and figures (where "he" is used as a generic, it is often qualified with a male figure).
- The language used to describe the characters and their actions (more positive adjectives and verbs for males).
- Depiction of the characters as active or passive (females are often shown being assisted by males or as mere observers).
- Pictures of families often show boys as first-born or brothers leading their sisters.

***Career paths:***

There are persistent attitudes that some subjects are hard for females and others are inappropriate (soft) for males. This is often reinforced by the lack of facilities for science subjects in girls' schools. Teachers also play a big role in reinforcing career stereotyping e.g. that girls should aspire to be teachers and nurses (professions regarded as family-like) while boys should aspire to be engineers, doctors etc. (careers preferred as more powerful and better paying so men can fulfil their role as breadwinners).

According to Human Rights Watch, the education of girls is interrupted. In many instances girls who have been victims of sexual violence at school, leave school for some time, change schools,

or even cease attending school entirely, fearing continuing abuse from those who have raped, sexually assaulted or harassed them<sup>108</sup>.

- **Media**

The media is a potent socializing agent as well and it is seen as a source of information. It is a form of communication. Koss claims that psychologists have articulated the powerful effect of observational learning in gender role socialization and have documented the harmful effects of cultural images purveyed in the media, that increasingly merge violence and male sexuality<sup>109</sup>. For example, the court has found that rates of attempted and completed rape have increased in places like Denmark, England, Sweden, the United States, Australia and New Zealand, following the availability of pornography.<sup>110</sup>

Giddens argues that “a vast amount of research work has been carried out, trying to analyze the influence of particular television programmes, or types of programmes, on attitudes of children and adults; most of this research is not conclusive in its conclusion”.<sup>111</sup> It is still not agreed, for example, how far the portrayal of violence promotes aggressive behaviour among children. Also by implication, it cannot be doubted that the media profoundly influences people’s attitudes and outlooks.

An example can be given to show that the media plays a role in influencing gender-based violence in a number of ways. Young children are being influenced in the early aspects of gender learning. Male and female adults are seen handling infants differently. If one reads the pre-school books and stories one will find exactly what is being said here. The findings or observations point to a clear difference in gender roles. Males play a much larger part in the stories and pictures than females – outnumbering females by a ratio of 11:1. The activities of males and females are also different. Males are engaged in adventurous pursuits and outdoor activities demanding independence and strength.

Females are displayed as being passive and are confined mostly to indoor activities. They cook and clean for men. This is not different from how male and female adults were represented in the

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<sup>108</sup> See Human Rights Watch, ‘Scared at School, Sexual Violence Against Girls in South, African Schools. New York. 2001:61.

<sup>109</sup> See Koss. M.P. 1994:26.

<sup>110</sup> Ibid.

<sup>111</sup> See Giddens 1998:79.

storybooks. Women who were not wives and mothers are imaginary creatures like witches. A critical analysis of the kinds of books mentioned will reveal that not a single woman had an occupation outside the home. By contrast, the men are depicted in a large range of roles; as fighters, policemen, judges, kings and so forth. What people read in books is found in television programmes. Similar images are found in the commercials that appear at regular intervals throughout the programmes. Women are depicted as commercial objects and very few in leadership and management positions.

Vogelman and Eagle argue that violence against women, particularly sexualized violence, such as rape and incest, is an area much used and abused by the media since it attracts so much popular attention.<sup>112</sup> While media exposure can serve to educate around and condemn abuse, the mechanism by which such material is disseminated is also patriarchal. Much media coverage serves to perpetuate existing stereotypes, reporting only on the most lurid assaults and emphasizing the innocence of particular victims and the abnormality of the perpetrator. Vogelmann argues that a combination of racial and gender stereotyping is apparent in the number of Black-men-on-White women rapes reported on, in proportion to their relative occurrences, which are in actuality about 50% of all reported rapes.<sup>113</sup>

The media's coverage of women abuse is problematic, given the contradictions inherent in expressing outrage, while also presenting women as commodities and encouraging sexual objectification. Vogelmann contends that feminist theories argued that the link between the use of women and women's bodies in advertising and in pornography objectifies them and encourages men to violate their bodies.<sup>114</sup>

- **Patriarchy and patriolocality**

Traditionally it is a norm for a woman to move to her husband's home upon marriage. It is expected of every African woman to relocate, to leave her own home and go to her marital home, even if she and her husband do not live there permanently owing to reasons of employment. This

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<sup>112</sup> See Vogelmann and Eagle Gillian 'Overcoming Endemic Violence against Women in South Africa', *Social Justice Vol. 18*. Nos. 1-2, 1991:219.

<sup>113</sup> See Vogelmann 1990.

<sup>114</sup> See Vogelmann Lloyd and Eagle Gillian 1991:219, also see Faust. B 1980, *Women, Sex and Pornography*. Harmondsworth. Penguin; Dworkin, A, 1982, *Our Blood, Prophecies and Discourses on Sexual Politics*, London, The Women's Press.

patrilocality can be termed “female migration”. Even though wives do not reside at the husband’s residence, his parental place or home is regarded as their home.

The patrilocal residence refers to a homestead that comprises of the eldest male member, his wives, his unmarried brothers and unmarried daughters as well as other blood relatives. As we have discussed the concept of family, this can be referred to as an extended family. The matrimonial home and composition of the family dictate that the husband’s family plays a significant role in the couple’s life. In most cases the son is always favoured. Most women blame the violence against them on the interference of in-laws, relatives and friends in their relationships. With regard to the involvement and interference of the family members, the newly wed woman (*umakoti*) always has problems with the *mmama-zala* (mother-in-law). Other conflicts are usually between the wife and the *amadodakazi*, meaning sisters-in-law.

The reasons for these conflicts vary, quarrels over property, money and other minor things. Sometimes it is jealousy from the side of member against the new family member. Generally speaking the family of the man often fails to completely accept the wife (*umakoti*). They regard her as an extra addition to the family. It becomes a big problem especially when the man is a breadwinner in the house.

- **Multiple partners**

Multiple partners refer to a man who is having extra-marital affairs. This kind of practice also contributes to family violence. This violence can take different forms. It ranges from emotional abuse to physical abuse and sexual abuse. Once a man begins to have a sexual relationship outside his home, trouble for his wife generally ensues. A man’s behaviour changes and he often becomes obnoxious and offensive towards his wife. He starts harassing the wife and generally neglects the children and his home. He spends more time and energy with his ‘girlfriend’. The problem begins when his wife confronts him about his obligations to his home. The man gets defensive and this invariably leads to conflict that might culminate in physical violence. Because of this, the children also become the victims of the circumstances.

As mentioned before, when a man has an affair outside his marriage, he starts to see faults in anything the wife does. Anything out of place, no matter how small it is, such as spoons on the floor, will earn her criticism. If the woman responds the man tends to beat her. A woman in this



situation told her story to me: “My husband has not slept with me since I had my last born who is now three years old.” This was quite disturbing according to her. She had lost emotional connection with her husband. Whenever there is this kind of a problem there is a change of pattern in the couple’s sexual relationship, resulting in an unpleasant relationship in the home.

An extra-marital relationship has a negative effect on the family’s general atmosphere and leads to confrontational communication or to complete breakdown. For a man to have an extra-marital affair was not seen as a problem, though it was violating women and unfortunately some women have accepted it. Some accepted it because they had no alternative.

- **Workplace**

Many other socializing agencies exist, besides those I have mentioned as social contexts, in which individuals spend large parts of their lives. The workplace is in all cultures an important setting where the socializing process operates. It is only in industrial societies where a large number of people work outside the home. In traditional communities many people till the land close to where they live or have workshops there. The work environment often poses unfamiliar demands calling for major adjustments in a person’s outlook or behaviour.

In the past all members of the family participated in work on the land or with the handcrafts. In towns, workshops were normally in the home and family members contributed to various aspects of the production process. Wives and children worked directly with men in tailoring, shoemaking and baking. Woman often had considerable influence within the household as a result of their importance in the economic process, even if they were excluded from the male realm of politics and warfare. Wives of craftsmen often kept business accounts, as did those of farmers. Widows quite commonly owned and managed businesses.

The separation of the workplace from the home has changed much of this because of the development of modern industry. The movement of production into machinery was probably the largest single factor. Individuals hired specifically for the tasks in question, worked at the machines. This led to the fact that employers began to contract workers as individuals rather than families. As the practice declined, however, an increasing division became established between home and workplace. Women came to be associated with domestic salves, although the idea that a woman’s place is in the home had different implications for the women at varying levels in the

society. Affluent women enjoyed the services of maids, nurses and domestic servants. The burdens were harshest for poorer women, having to cope with the household chores as well as being employed in industrial work to supplement their husband's income.

The rates of employment of women outside the home, for all classes were quite low until well into the 20<sup>th</sup> C. The changes in the organization of employment as well sex- role stereotyping has contributed to this. Women in the twentieth century occupied the positions of being clerks and doing office work with the introduction of typewriters. They filled these occupations defined as "men's jobs" but only to a limited degree. Those women, who are economically successful, have to fit into the world in which they feel they do not fully belong. One of the major factors affecting women's careers is the male perception that for females, work comes second to having children. As might be expected the average remunerated employed women receive is well below that of men, although the difference has narrowed somewhat over the past ten years. Women are over-represented in the more poorly paid job sectors, but even within the same occupational categories, women on average have lower salaries.

This section discussed the second contributing factor to socialization that constitutes the 'unholy trinity'. The major focus in this section was to look at how peoples' lives are socially constructed and what tools are used, or what influences the social construction. It specifically analyzed the agents of socialization such as home, peer relationships, education, media, patriarchy and patrilocality, multiple partners and lastly, workplace. All these agents as discussed in this section proved that they played a vital role in formation of who we are and what we practice currently. This information will help the church and other interested parties in their attempts to respond to the challenge of family violence. Without knowing the causes of family violence the church will not be in a good position to address this challenge.

This takes the research to the next step of the 'unholy trinity' known as culture. Culture is also seen as the third contributing factor towards family violence.

#### **3.2.1.2.2. Culture**

This section will be looking at what culture is and how culture influences our lives as well as our practices. The idea here is not to discuss the concept of culture but rather to expose how it contributes towards family violence. The concept of culture, together with that of society is one

of the most widely used notions in sociology. In an attempt to understand the concept of culture amongst other sociologists a popular sociologist, Giddens' definition of culture will be used. Giddens defines the concept of culture as follows: "Culture consists of the values the members of a given group hold, the norms they follow and the material goods they create."<sup>115</sup> He regards values as an abstract ideal while norms are definite principles or rules which people are expected to observe. In this case norms represent the set of 'do's' and 'don'ts' of social life. According to a Unicef report, cultural ideology both in industrialized and developing countries provide legitimacy for violence against women in certain circumstances.<sup>116</sup>

When the term culture is used in an ordinary daily conversation, one often thinks of culture as an equivalent to higher things of the mind, such as art, literature, music and painting. In some cases sociologists use this concept as something that includes more activities. It is suffice to say that culture refers to the whole way of life of the members of society. Put it this way, culture includes how people dress, their marriage customs, family life, their patterns of work, religious ceremonies and leisure pursuits.<sup>117</sup>

Having defined the concept in question, one is faced with the question of culture becoming a contributing factor to domestic violence. At this stage it is important that we briefly deal with a few factors that influence culture and consequently render it a contributing factor to family violence. Sakala argues that most traditional and cultural practices in Southern Africa have a very negative connotation for women and in most cases these traditions place a man in a superior position, thus leaving women powerless and voiceless.<sup>118</sup> In support of her argument she identifies three of these traditional practices, which according to her dehumanize women and yet, both men and women facilitate the same practices.<sup>119</sup>

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<sup>115</sup> See Giddens Anthony 1989:31,

<sup>116</sup> See Unicef, *Domestic Violence Against Women and Girls* No.6 May. 2000:8

<sup>117</sup> See Giddens Anthony 1989:31.

<sup>118</sup> See Felicia Sakala. 'Violence Against Women in Southern Africa' In *Gender In Southern Africa: A Gender Perspective*, (eds.) Sapes Trust, Sapes Books Harare, 1998:48.

<sup>119</sup> Ibid, 49. The following are the practices that she refers to (1) Dry sex, this practice is performed by women themselves, and women do this not for themselves but for men to enjoy sex. (2) Ritual sexual cleansing, this is done when the husband dies and immediately after burial, the widow is given a man to have sexual intercourse with her. This man could be an uncle or brother of the deceased. It is believed that the widow will not go around carrying her husband's ghost. If the ritual cleansing is not performed there is a strong belief that the widow would be mentally confused or if she remarries the new husband would also die. This practice may expose the widow to sexually transmitted disease including HIV. (3) Wife inheritance, often the wife is given a husband against her will. This practice is believed to protect the widow so that she and her children are not destitute upon her husband's death.

The question of *lobola* becomes a major issue that men use to their advantage in abusing women. This is a cultural practice where an African family from the man's side is expected to make a payment to the woman's family. This is usually a requirement for marriage. Some are of the view that this custom undermines women's status and how they are treated in their matrimonial homes. In a study done in Swaziland, on 'Domestic Violence and Women's search for justice, interviewees highlighted this custom as a contributing factor to domestic violence.<sup>120</sup> The interviewees in particular viewed the payment of *lobola* (dowry) as having negative connotations as to how two people should treat each other within a marriage. For most women there is a feeling that the payment of *ilobolo* renders the woman the property of her husband.

At a workshop that I attended on the fight against family violence, a certain woman in a group discussion said, "*wandilobola ebhatalela nento yonke yam*" (This means that when he gave *ilobolo* to my parents he paid for everything)." In that workshop one could sense that this was a common feeling expressed by men paying *lobolo*. This *lobolo* business is degrading to women's status because women for whom *lobolo* was paid are sometimes to by their husbands as '*inkunkuma*' (pile of rubbish) and a piece of wood.

This clearly points to the fact that *ilobolo* creates inequality and disrespect between women and men, as the men who pays *lobolo* thinks they have more power than the poor women who are paid for. Kaman in her paper observed that (*kugurivo*) bride price in the *kikuyu* language of Kenya, forces women to enter into marriage as unequal partners who are perpetually dependant and assumed to be physically weak. She further argues that this may culminate in women's acceptance and internalization of all manners of violence<sup>121</sup>. This kind of practice to most women for whom *lobolo* has been paid entrenches an understanding that, "I was paid for" and must therefore succumb to a man's needs. If *lobolo* is to be understood as a price for purchasing a wife, the result is that women are reduced to an object. Again, they are predisposed to being targets of men's violent behaviour. The notion of male control of family wealth, inevitably places decision-making authority in male hands and establishes property rights over women and girls. In turn, the concept of ownership legitimizes control over women's sexuality.<sup>122</sup> This overview of the definition of culture and explanation of how it works in the African communities makes it obvious that it favours a particular group of people within the family. It is also clear that the

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<sup>120</sup> See Multiple Jeopardy: *Domestic Violence and Women's Search for Justice* 2002.

<sup>121</sup> See Kaman, Unpublished paper on 'Issues in Gender Violence' 1995.

<sup>122</sup> See Unicef. *Domestic Violence Against Women and Girls*, May No.6, Innocenti Research Centre, Florence Italy. 2000:8.

manner in which it is practiced places women in a disadvantaged situation. Hopefully in its attempt to respond to the challenge of family violence, the church will learn from this information and respond from an informed position.

The next item to be discussed is that of religion and looking at how it has contributed to family violence.

### **3.2.1.2. 3. RELIGION**

South Africa is a religious country and people living in African communities are also religious. It is important to look at how religion has contributed to violence against women at home, in the society and within the church. The variety of religious beliefs and organizations are so many, that scholars have found great difficulty in reaching a generally accepted definition of religion. Giddens argues that, “In the West, most people identify religion with Christianity – a belief in a supreme being, who commands us to prepare for the after life to come”.<sup>123</sup> This statement poses a challenge because we cannot define religion as a whole, in these terms. These beliefs and many other aspects of Christianity are absent from most of the other religions of the world.

Maluleke and Nadar argue that from the two stories of women that they interviewed, they saw that religion has been no ally of abused women. Neither these two women they are referring to, received support or help from their religious traditions. Instead, the interpretations of sacred texts by their religious leaders, as well as certain themes and sections in these sacred texts, tended to justify the violence they experienced.<sup>124</sup> This clearly shows that so far as religion is one of the agents of socialization, in one way or another, it is not saying anything against violence towards women and children, or religious leaders are silent about it.

As we try to understand the concept of violence against women, we must not confine it to the home situation. There are escalating cases of rape in society and sexual exploitation and abuse in the workplace that are increasing. Violence against women is also known to be taking place in the church and this is where women should be able to turn for help. Instead, when they attempt to speak out, they are not believed or they are not taken seriously. It is generally known that in the

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<sup>123</sup> See Giddens 1989:452.

<sup>124</sup> See Maluleke and Nadar, ‘Breaking the Covenant of Violence Against Women’ In the Journal of Theology for Southern Africa, Special Issue: *Overcoming Violence Against Women and Children*, 114 November 2002. 14

cases of violence against women there is silence. Njoroge states that this in itself is violence. The culture of silence transfers itself from the home to the church.<sup>125</sup> Religion, like culture has been used to marginalize, subordinate and exclude women in the church. The power of patriarchy and hierarchy reinforced each other to the extent that women's voices are easily drowned or censored. On the other hand, religion encourages male dominance and that has been valued.

The invisibility of women in decision-making processes, in leadership structures and in theological institutions became a rule, rather than the exception and despite their majority in the church. According to Njoroge patriarchy and sexism in missionary Christianity and theology has led women to carve out an independent space in women's organizations in the church, where hospitality and fundraising are major pre-occupations.<sup>126</sup> For a long time theology has been the preserve of men. The prevention of women from participating in all ministries of the church and from undertaking theological education is unjust and in contrast with the gospel message. Njoroge argues that the lack of critical evaluation of leadership styles in the church and society has trapped women in models of leadership shaped by patriarchal and hierarchical values.<sup>127</sup>

The Christian religion is a resolute affair in its symbolism as well as its hierarchy. While Mary, the mother of Jesus is sometimes treated as having divine qualities, God is the Father, a male figure. And Jesus took the human shape of a man. Woman is portrayed as created from a rib taken from man. There are many female characters in biblical texts and some are portrayed as acting charitably or bravely, but the prime parts are reserved for males. There is no female equivalent to Moses, for example, and in the New Testament all the apostles are men.

Because religious edicts are taken to be sacrosanct, religion becomes one of the most rigid systems of perpetuating patriarchy and gender disparities, because scriptures are used unscrupulously to justify the status quo. There is a selective use of scripture to support patriarchy. A good example is church weddings in which women are told to submit to their husbands.

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<sup>125</sup> See Njoroge Nyambura, 'The missing voice of African Women Doing theology' In *Journal of theology for Southern Africa*, November , Issue No 99, 1997: 8.

<sup>126</sup> See Njoroge 'The missing voice of African Women Doing theology' In *Journal of theology for Southern Africa*, November , Issue No 99, 1997:82.

<sup>127</sup> See Njoroge 'The missing voice of African Women Doing theology' In *Journal of theology for Southern Africa*, November , Issue No 99, 1997 :82

This discussion now leads to the second cause of family violence, which is economic causes. The next section will help the readers and the church to understand how economy has contributed to family violence.

### **3.2.2. ECONOMIC CAUSES**

It is obvious that in every household finances are needed and automatically someone at home must work in order to fulfil this need. In the past it was always assumed that a man must go and seek employment. This idea has been influenced by cultural beliefs that a man is the head of the family. This gave men authority over their families and the very same authority in most cases has been abused. This section is going to assist with a broader picture of how finances affected the family life.

The economic dimensions of violence also show how gender-based violence arises from women's economic dependence and the impact of poverty. Sakala argues that as the economic situation deteriorates, the despair people feel tends to increase incidents of family violence with women and children being the primary victims.<sup>128</sup> Again, because of the history of patriarchy at home, the father is always seen as the head of the family and is in charge of the finances in the home. This means that he can do anything he likes. Family violence in this case results from arguments and misunderstandings about how money is being spent at home.

Hilary Astor notes that economic abuse involves the perpetrator maintaining control over family funds and preventing access to money, including money for essential items such as food, clothing and other household purchases.<sup>129</sup> Most of the time men take advantage of the fact that some women are not working and those who are working, are sometimes not earning sufficiently. They depend on the men for their financial support.

It is now clear that men did not only have political power within the family, meaning that they can make decisions without consultation. This meant that they also had economic power, they can decide on the family's finances. They were no longer family providers but also dictators. Women and children developed that dependency syndrome and this is why they cannot challenge men.

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<sup>128</sup> See Sakala Felicia (1998:29) 'Gender in Southern Africa: A gender Perspective' Dape books, Harare.

<sup>129</sup> See Hilary Astor, 'National Committee on Violence Against Women' position paper on Mediation prepared for the NCVAW, 1991:13.

This discussion takes us to the third cause for family violence known as the legal causes. This will help the readers and church to understand how the legal system supported the male dominance over women, even at home. This section will look at how the law protected or favoured women or men in the whole justice system.

### **3.2.3. LEGAL CAUSES**

This section on legal causes will investigate how the laws and policies impacted and contributed to family violence. These laws, rules and regulations had different impacts from different institutions and situations. The intention in this section is not to discuss the in depth investigation, rather it is to give an overview of the legal practices within the South African government. It seeks to bring about an understanding of how women and children were harmed by these laws and also how men benefited from the system.

A few aspects of legal causes are mentioned as the contributing factors towards family violence. The lack of firm legal protection, particularly within the family home was a strong factor in perpetuating violence against women. According to the research work conducted by Unicef, the report reveals that in many countries however, violence against women is exacerbated by legislation, law enforcement and a judicial system that did not recognize domestic violence as a crime.<sup>130</sup> Also the investigation by Human Rights Watch has found that in cases of domestic violence, law enforcement officials frequently reinforce the abuser's attempt to control and demean their victims.<sup>131</sup>

Until recently, the public and private distinction ruled most legal systems a major obstacle to women's rights. States are seen as responsible for protecting the rights of women even in connection with offences committed within the home. The challenge here is to end impunity for the perpetrators as one means of preventing future abuse.

Most countries have multiple legal systems, which combine statutory, traditional and religious edicts, which create loopholes in dealing with issues of violence. Lack of access to legal services, justice protection for victims and their properties is a major factor in denying women their rights and the perpetrators of violence often go away unpunished. Out-dated laws, negative attitudes of

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<sup>130</sup> See Unicef, is United Children's Fund, Innocenti Research Centre, No.6-May 2000:8.

<sup>131</sup> See Human Rights Watch Global Report on Women Rights, New York 1995.



prosecutors, magistrates, judges, court clerks and others in the law enforcement sectors leave victims of violence traumatized even further. The lack of commitment by governments to the implementation of commitments to international instruments<sup>132</sup> are key factors leading to the unfair treatment of victims and the perpetuation of violence in society. Ignorance of women concerning their rights and the failures of governments and society in combating violence, are the other contributing factors to entrenching gender-based violence in society.

All countries are assumed to be governed by policies, sets of rules and laws. In most countries, national constitutions provide for the equal rights of women and men. However, laws and policies have not been amended to conform to the constitutions. The slow pace at which the recommended steps of aligning the laws with the constitutions are moving in most countries are a major constraint to achieving equality between females and males. Law reform processes are slow and dependent on the support of the lawmakers, most of them men who are not necessarily supportive of gender equality. The experience with the reform of such laws as inheritance, citizenship and affiliation in several countries, have demonstrated that women cannot expect much sympathy from parliaments that are male-dominated, patriarchal in attitude and insensitive to issues of gender and the rights of women as integral to human rights. In most countries, there are no laws governing domestic violence. The law enforcement agencies including the police and the judiciary largely rely on penal provisions relating to assault and battery to fill the gap, inadequate as they are in dealing with the seriousness of the problem.

In matrilineal and patrilineal societies alike, men are the key architects and custodians of customary law and authority as well as government policies and programmes. The absence of women from decision-making positions is a major factor contributing to the negative policy and political environment, which perpetuates or at least tolerates violence. Most governments only pay lip service to the global commitments to eliminate violence and often sign conventions and covenants they have no intention of implementing.

#### **3.2.4. POLITICAL CAUSES**

This section will briefly focus on history and politics and how they affected the life of women, resulting in family violence. Politically, family violence can be traced from different periods of history in the world. It can be traced during the time of colonization, during the time of the

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<sup>132</sup> CEDAW, PFA, UN 'Declaration of Human Rights'

industrial revolution, the period of slave trade and in South Africa, it can be traced in the history of the apartheid system. For other periods, like the period of colonization, the period of the industrial revolution as well as the period of slave trade, the chapter will give an overview of what happened. The main focus will be on South African history and its contribution.

Under the section on the South African history the focus for discussion will be on the apartheid system and analyzing its policy under four points: migrant labour and segregation, women and migrant the labour system, influx control and lastly, the effects on women.

#### **3.2.4.1. THE PERIOD OF COLONIZATION**

This section will look at what colonization is and how colonization impacted on or contributed to family life. Colonization is a process whereby a group of foreigners take over the rule of another colony by force. This started in 1652 in the Cape, under the command of Jan Van Riebeeck. They came to South Africa in attempt to escape poverty in Europe and saw an opportunity in South Africa, especially in the Cape.

This period of colonization brought about two things, slavery and immigration. Immigrants were coming from Europe during the time of Simon van der Stel.<sup>133</sup> In the process of immigration young girls who were orphans were imported to provide the settlers with wives. People were robbed of their property, those who were farm owners became slaves of the colonist. This affected the family life because the man in the family had to go and seek employment elsewhere. The arrival of the colonist was the beginning of slavery in the Cape. Shillington argues that from the start, slave labour was widely used at the Cape, initially it was personal servants of senior company officials and then as the main source of agricultural labour. This resulted in economic and social problems for the people in the Cape. It affected their style of living. Human rights were not observed and respected.

The system of colonization contributed a lot to the destruction of family values. With this background, the next section will deal with the period of industrialization and its contribution to family violence.

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<sup>133</sup> See Kevin Shillington, *History of Southern Africa* Longman Group, England (1987:23).

### 3.2.4.2. THE PERIOD OF INDUSTRIALIZATION

The first question that needs to be unpacked is what the industrial revolution is and how it impacted on women. Industrial revolution was a revolution that began in Britain which brought about a radical change in her industrial and economic life.<sup>134</sup> This was actually a shift from agriculture to an industrialized setup. In other words, it was a shift from working from home to go and work outside the home. It was a period when machines were invented and factories set up for work purposes. Before the industrial revolution people did their spinning at their home. The period before industrial revolution was a friendly period in family life because they were all working together from home. There was no one who had to leave home to seek for employment.

The industrial revolution had far-reaching results, not only for Britain, but also for the rest of the world.<sup>135</sup> In the course of time it brought about a radical change in the social, economic and political life of the world. These three results of the industrial revolution i.e. social, economic and political results, affected the family life and especially women, not only in Britain where it started but also in the rest of the world. Looking at the social results the issue of urbanization affected a number of families because migration had to take place. Most of the small farmers had to find employment in the industrial towns.

The rapid growth of new towns and cities created enormous social problems. With the influx of so many people there was a serious shortage of housing. Consequently the houses of factory workers, who had to live as near as possible to their work were built cheaply and in haste. Because of the shortage of housing there was overcrowding and living conditions were deteriorating. In many cases families were crowded together in a single room. If this was the case with housing, these living conditions could easily lead to violence against women and children in many forms.

As a result of this shift exploitation took place in different forms. In the factories working conditions were no better. The workers were underpaid. In comparison with the price of food, the wages were shockingly low and led to a poor standard of living. The former friendly relationship which had existed between the employer and his employee in the home industries disappeared.

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<sup>134</sup> See H.G.J Lintvelt (eds.) *Time lines History for Standard 8*, 1985 syllabus, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition, Maskew Miller Longman Cape Town, 1885:82.

<sup>135</sup> Ibid. 85.

Again, there was exploitation of women and child labour. Due to the low wage that was paid to men, their wives and children were forced to go and work. Even children of only four to five years were employed to perform tasks in factories.<sup>136</sup> This situation clearly shows destruction on family life and how the period of industrialization contributed to it.

#### **3.2.4.3. THE PERIOD OF SLAVE TRADE**

The period of the Atlantic slave trade was one of the most painful experiences in the lives of the slaves. Malherbe and Worden define slavery as follows: slaves are people owned by other people and they can be bought and sold like a house, or a horse, or a piece of jewellery.<sup>137</sup> This means that slaves had no right to family life. Though they managed to sometimes live as husband and wife, they knew that they could be parted at any time, should a need arise. The slave owner may sell their children to someone else. Slave owners had complete power over them. They could give them new names and force them to do any kind of work.

In the case of the Atlantic slave trade the slaves were exported across the Atlantic to America. These people were taken from the African countries to become slaves in America. They were separated from their families. These slaves were sent to America because of the demand for manpower to work in the mines and plantations. As more mines were opened and more plantations were set up, so the demand for slaves increased, between 1530 and 1600; an average of 13 000 slaves per year were being exported to America.<sup>138</sup>

The period of slavery had a bad impact on family life because even those slaves, who were freed, remained separated from their families. This was a violation of human rights. Many slaves suffered different forms of violence and yet, they had no right to complain because they were treated like property.

#### **3.2.4.4. THE PERIOD OF APARTHEID IN SOUTH AFRICA**

This section will investigate how the period of the apartheid system and its policies impacted on family violence in South Africa. It will pay especial attention on the migrant labour and

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<sup>136</sup> Ibid. 91.

<sup>137</sup> See Malherbe and Warden, 'Slaves Always Working' Shuter and Shooter, Pietmaritzburg, 1986:2. For more information and reading on slavery please refer to the following: A.J. Böeseken, *Slaves and Free Blacks at the Cape 1658-1700*, Tafelberg Publishers, 1977. Josephine Kamm, *The Slave Trade Knowing World History* Bell & Hyman, London, 1983.

<sup>138</sup> See Adu Boahen (eds.) *Topics in West African History* Longman Group, England 1986:107.

segregation (3.2.4.4.1), women and the migrant labour system (3.2.4.4.2.), influx control (3.2.4.4.3.) as well as the effects on women (3.2.4.4.4.) These four aspects will illustrate how severe family violence was under the apartheid system. It will also investigate how women responded to the challenge.

It is shown that communities that have experienced high levels of oppression and violence of this nature continue to experience a high level of violence, including gender-based violence.<sup>139</sup>

In many instances the pain of colonization has been internalized into abusive and self-abusive behaviours, often in families and communities. Apartheid was a deliberate attempt to subordinate and oppress the majority of South Africans and in the process undermined the identity, culture and social infrastructure. ‘The fragmentation that exists in the community is indicative of the fragmentation of identities of individuals...’<sup>140</sup> The use of violence by the apartheid state and in the struggle against apartheid, further reinforced its use as a legitimate form and expression of opposition.<sup>141</sup> With South Africa’s history of colonization, followed by an internal system of racial oppression since 1948, entire communities were systematically attacked and oppressed. This may account for the high levels of family violence. At the same time family violence is not merely a post-apartheid occurrence. It appears that it has been part of South Africa’s social fabric in all cultures and racial groupings, but it was not addressed.

#### **3.2.4.4.1. MIGRANT LABOUR AND SEGREGATION**

The structure of apartheid was built on a system of migrant labour and territorial segregation. For black people in South Africa this meant strict controls on their movement, on where they may live and where they may work. For many it meant a more or less permanent separation from families. For black women, above all for African women, it meant particularly intense forms of exploitation and oppression.

Many parts of the world are familiar with the phenomenon of migrant workers – “guest-workers”– leaving their own country to work in another for a specified period. In South Africa,

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<sup>139</sup> See Alicia Pieterse, Ayanda Mvimbi and Riana Botes, 2004:3, *Working with Men to End Gender-based Violence Inter-fund Republic of South Africa*.

<sup>140</sup> See Foster L.A., ‘Violence Against Women: The problem in South Africa’. Presented at Common Wealth Heads of Governments Meeting in South Africa Durban. 1999, access it <http://www.ippf.org/resource/gbv/chogm99/foster/htm>.

<sup>141</sup> See Harper, C. 2003. ‘Rights for all in the New South Africa. Human Rights Dialogue’ (Fall 2003) *Violence Against Women*, <http://www.carnegiecouncil.org/>

too, there are workers from other countries in Southern Africa. However, in South Africa migrant labour existed primarily in special form, as an integral and basic part of the apartheid system. In the distorting mirror of apartheid, all Africans working outside the Bantustans are officially considered to be migrants who leave their own “country” to work in “white” South Africa – a different country.

This precept is applied in varying degrees to all black workers and not only to those from the Bantustans working on a temporary contract outside the Bantustans. By law all Africans must carry passes and those who gain residence rights outside the Bantustans are given them only as qualification to the general rule, which states that they are citizens of another country. Every person, black or white has to live in an area designated as their “own area”. For the white minority this means most of the country including the areas where almost all economic activity is based. For the black majority it means living either in a Bantustan, or a white-owned farm, or in a black “township” near a “white” town. For many black women in domestic work it means living on the white employer’s property in separate accommodation.. Most of those who live in the townships must, if they are employed, travel each day to work in the “white” areas.

Since the 1960’s the black townships have been concentrated into big regional townships far from town and city centres. This has often involved forced removals of people and the destruction of existing and sometimes mixed communities that were located closer to work and other facilities. Where it has been possible the government has created the new townships just inside the Bantustan borders, close enough to centres of economic activity, to allow workers to travel each day or each week to work outside the Bantustans. In a special meaning that apartheid gives, the word they are described as is “commuters”. Restrictions on the building of houses for Africans outside the Bantustans have created a deliberate shortage of family housing, forcing ever more people to become “squatters”, to become contract labourers and live away from their families (often in a single-sex-hostel), or to move to the Bantustan township to become commuters. As modern transport has developed the distances have grown greater.

The full extent of migrant labour in South Africa is not known, because official figures count only those on formally registered temporary contracts who work outside their places of residence. Many others are also forced to live away from their families for the week or the year and travel home after their working period. While almost all the foreign migrants in 1980 were men, one quarter of the internal migrant workers were women.

In *Migrant Labour in South Africa*, Francis Wilson says that the migrant labour system is based on the premise that a human being can be broken into two parts: a 'labour unit' working in the town, separated from the other part, a man with a family, with hopes and aspirations. 'If men were primarily seen as human beings who among other things were workers, then such exclusion would not be possible. This split is most clearly seen in the division of the family imposed by migrant labour. But a divided life was imposed on all black people in South Africa. The township system is both part and an extension of the migrant labour system. Together they profoundly shaped the lives of all black people in South Africa.

Nevertheless, apartheid rests on migrant labour in its fullest sense and it is the condition of those caught up most directly in this form of labour, which most clearly reveals the heart of apartheid and its impact on women. Migrant labour, as other communities have found to their cost, has an adverse effect on family life and social development, since the men and women who should be playing their part as husbands wives, as mothers and fathers and as members of the community, are absent for long periods. Where such dislocation is temporary and small-scale, the effects may be remedied but in South Africa a large section of workers are permanently migrant workers.

'We are trying to introduce the migratory labour pattern as far as possible in every sphere', stated a prominent Nationalist MP, Mr. G F van L Froneman, who later became Deputy Minister of Justice, Mines and Planning. 'This is, in fact, the entire basis of our policy as far as the white economy is concerned. In 1969 Mr. Froneman named the conditions under which 'foreign labour'<sup>142</sup> could be used without conflicting with apartheid. This included the denial of rights of domicile or citizenship outside the Bantustans. He emphasized that the African labour force must not be burdened with superfluous appendages such as wives, children and dependants who could not provide services'.

"We need them to work for us," stated Prime Minister BJ Vorster, in 1968 "but the fact that they work for us can never entitle them to claim political rights. Not now, nor in the future ... under any circumstances"<sup>143</sup>.

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<sup>142</sup> He was referring to Africans from South Africa.

<sup>143</sup> B.J. Vorster public speech in 1968.

#### **3.2.4.4.2. WOMEN AND THE MIGRANT LABOUR SYSTEM**

Migrant labour deeply disrupted the lives of South Africa women. The system itself made it virtually illegal for many African women to live with their husbands, except during the annual two-week holiday when migrant workers were allowed to visit their wives in the Bantustans. It made a mockery of family life, creating an impassable chasm between husband and wife. Official statistics about the marital status of South African Women of various groups tell their own story about the social consequences of the migrant labour system.

The migrant labour system affected the lives of most people living in the Bantustans, a large amount of workers outside the Bantustans, and indirectly the lives of all South Africans, black and white. During the long periods of their youthful, sexually active lives, husbands and wives had to live apart. For many, a family unit was never formed.

Francis Wilson sums up the evidence of his research on migrant labour, with a devastating list of arguments against it, including many that directly affect the lives of women. Among others, it aggravates and creates illegitimacy, bigamy and prostitution; breakdown of parental authority, malnutrition, tuberculosis and venereal disease. Together with influx control and mass removals under “resettlement” plans, migrant labour deprived millions of black women of their most elementary and fundamental rights.

#### **3.2.4.4.3. INFLUX CONTROL**

South Africa’s migrant workers and their families did not freely choose to live and work under the conditions which were described. A vast legal and administrative apparatus, backed up by armed force, was used to maintain the migrant labour system. The measures used to enforce these policies are called “Influx Control”, and the laws are known as the “Pass Laws”.

The idea that families of migrants would secure their own subsistence from the land in the Bantustans were based on an assumption of a static subsistence sector of the economy, untouched by industrialization or by the introduction of commercial farming in the rest of the country. There was, however, no way of confining these changes to a single sector of the economy: they penetrated the whole society, leading to the dissolution of existing modes of production in some areas and the conservation of their forms, although in a stunted and distorted manner, in others.



However, the system depended on keeping as many women as possible in the “reserves”. If the whole family became part of the urban industrial society then the claimed rationale for setting the payment of the male worker at the level of a single man, would fall away. Thus, African women were at first denied access to the new skills and the new relationships of developing capitalism, except in insignificant numbers. When they did become wage-earners it was mainly in domestic service and agriculture, where they were not part of an organized labour force.

The only way of trying to make women and their families remain in such conditions was to make it difficult for them to move to the urban areas (to seek work, join the men and find food for their children). Thus, the pass laws were extended to women in the 1950s. Every African over 16 years outside the Bantustan areas were forced to carry a pass book; these were a form of identification that recorded where the holder may live, where he or she was employed, whether taxes have been paid and other vital information for total control.

For women from the Bantustans the pass book contained a section for the consent of the commissioner of the district defined as home, and for the consent of father, male guardian or husband to her going to work or live in another district. Passbooks had to be produced at all points of contact with officials and could be used to control every aspect of life. The pass laws were an even more heavy burden on African women than on African men. Not only did they need the male consent to leave home or to work in another place, but also since 1964 a total ban was placed on the further entry of women into the urban areas outside the Bantustans, except on a visitor’s permit. Pass laws of one kind or another have applied to African men since the nineteenth century and even earlier in some parts of what is now South Africa.

African women remained outside the pass laws framework until 1952 and their struggle against the pass laws, beginning in 1913, is an epic story. Before the 1950s, African women did not have to carry passes. Nevertheless, it was still more difficult for women than for men to move to the expanding towns, largely because of employment practices and restrictions on the provision of family housing. In most areas of work employers recruited mainly men and in some areas exclusively men.

Whenever substantial numbers of African women have been drawn into wage labour, moves have been made to extend influx control to them. The first attempt, in 1913, was unsuccessful. But with changing patterns of industrialization and with the progressive deterioration of subsistence agriculture under the impact of apartheid, the number of women in wage labour increased rapidly.

This was particularly marked during the 1940s when the manufacturing industry expanded. In 1952 the whole system of influx control was reviewed and streamlined. The changes included the extension to African women of the requirement to carry passes. As a result African women could only come to the towns and cities to seek work with the permission of rural labour bureau. They could, however, still come as dependants of men who were resident in town. In 1964 this right was withdrawn. Women already in employment and those who already had rights of residence could stay, but others could come to the towns only as contract workers. Those who came on any other basis did so illegally. In 1968 all building of family accommodation in the urban areas was stopped.

Occasionally taking issues to court has opened loopholes: but they were relatively minor or quickly closed. The legal victories, though small and precarious, have been important. At the same time they underline the fact that unless they have been born in an urban area outside a Bantustan, most African women are dependent on their relationship to men for residence rights.

#### **3.2.4.4.4. EFFECTS ON WOMEN**

The effects on women were particularly severe. Winterveld is only 15 kilometres from the administrative capital of South Africa, Pretoria, but it is with the area designated as the Bophuthatswana Bantustan. Because it is near a city that provides a certain amount of work, from the 1960s large numbers of squatters moved there, renting land on which to build shacks. Its current population is estimated at three quarters of a million or more. The resulting effects on the lives of the women have been investigated and analyzed by Joanne Yawitch, and the following are some of her findings.

For the majority of women there was no work; they were dependent on the wages of husbands, mostly unskilled workers. They had to accept whatever they could get, however little, without question. 'In Winterveld it is common to find women who starve themselves to feed their husbands and children because there is so little money. Some women could tell with extreme bitterness that they did not know how much their husbands earned.'

This is the first factor in their powerlessness. Then the men themselves worked under conditions of exploitation, which, because of their lack of political power and their exclusion from their

collective bargaining, were often beyond their control. 'It is the women who bear the brunt of their frustration and aggression that their husbands are powerless to express within the workspace. In most areas around African communities women and children-beating was as common as rape. Sexual aggression is, in a situation such as this, a more or less immutable fact of life.' Yawitch goes on to explain that the isolation that defines the lives of 'housewives' in many Western countries is summed up in this situation.,.

Forced removal and resettlement led not only to the breakdown of the family. The community organizations and their essential work were also destroyed. Unity and co-operation can only grow where there is some security. Women were strongly drawn to community groups, often church-based, called manyanos and organized associations called stockfels. With the removals, the *manyano*'s were destroyed. The destruction of these support systems such as community organizations and manyano's, killed the women's hope. This marked the end of their fellowship and the sharing of their personal experiences with one another during that period.

Forced removal and resettlement played a major role in suppressing organized opposition to apartheid policies through the destruction of stable communities and social structures, and the placing together of a haphazard assortment of people, often strangers who in the harsh struggle for individual survival cannot form new relationships. Often this is compounded by the fact that many have moved more than once, often three or four times.

Not only community relations were destroyed when the communities were uprooted, scattered, and relocated in barren and hostile places. Relocation obliterates tradition, continuity, culture, and history. Often people have lived in the places from which they were removed, for generations; their multiple interlocking relationships were destroyed. Relocation obliterates homes, possessions, smallholdings, gardens (they all gave valuable access to growing food).

This section on political causes provides a clear picture of how politics played a role in violating women and children's rights to have a good life with their families. It also attempted to give an overview of the history of family violence, tracing it from different periods in history such as the period of colonization, the period of industrialization, the period of the slave trade and the period of apartheid in South Africa. During the period of apartheid in South Africa, it attempted to provide an understanding of how the policies of the apartheid system affected the family life, especially that of the African people. This period discussed the issues related to migrant labour

and segregation, women and migrant labour system, influx control and lastly, the effects on women. All these helped to give a better and clear understanding of where the history of family violence emanated.

The next part of this chapter will discuss the complicating factors of family violence. It will be looking at the impact of family violence on women and children's lives, also how it impacted the family at large.

### **3.3. COMPLICATING FACTORS OF FAMILY VIOLENCE**

This section will try to identify the results of family violence on the individuals – it will attempt to demonstrate the impact of family violence. As much as it is important to know about the results of family violence, the major focus in this chapter is on causes so that it can be easy to find a way of combating it. In the second part of the chapter, the focus will be on three issues namely, the physical impact (3.3.1.), the psychological impact (3.3.2.) and the social impact of family violence (3.3.3.). The impact of violence on women varies widely. It also depends on the nature of the particular incident, the woman's relationship with the abuser and the context in which it took place. Violence against women typically has physical, psychological, social and economic consequences.

The aim of this section is to draw attention to some of the long as well as short-term implications of violence for women, their children, their families and the wider society. By examining the consequences of violence on individuals other than the women themselves, and on society, it also intends to refute the assumptions that violence is made up of individuals, isolated episodes that have a clear beginning and end, and that its effects are restricted to affecting women only.

#### **3.3.1. PHYSICAL IMPACT**

Violence against women in the home is widely dismissed as a normal part of life with a male partner. However, this violence can be extreme. In the worst cases, violence can lead to death. The Cambodian organization PADV revealed the severity of the physical injuries sustained by 50 women who faced violence from their husbands in the home.

PADV's survey reports:

“It usually began with punching. Once the woman collapsed on the ground, the husband commonly began kicking her. He kicked her arms, legs and into the stomach and back. One woman explained how she vomited blood during one episode while her husband was kicking her in the back. Other women described being kicked on the head or face. In addition women were strangled until they could barely breathe, dragged by their hair and their heads pounded against cement floor, a wooden bed frame, a column of a house, or a dirt ground outside the house; they were intentionally poisoned. Thirty-four of the 50 women interviewed were hit with weapons such as bamboo rods, sugar cane, palm stems, and metal bars. Knives, axes, guns (about one-quarter of the women’s husbands owned guns) were also used. Several women were burned using smouldering firewood and burning torches. Many of the women used the word rumlop for rape, or described how they were physically forced to have sex<sup>144</sup>.

The physical consequence of rape includes the risk of pregnancy and possibly permanent damage to women’s health, including their reproductive health. Pickup Francine argues that, within an economically coercive context, as in the case of women trafficked into social slavery, or in wartime,<sup>145</sup> all sex under duress places women at risk of immediate and horrific physical injury, of pregnancy and of sickness or death through sexually transmitted diseases (STDs). The spread of HIV/AIDS to women in the heterosexual population is closely linked to coerced sex and sexual violence.

For a woman who is impregnated as a result of rape, abortion may be legally denied, practically obstructed, or unacceptable to her on religious or cultural grounds. Abortion, or the lack of it, can compound women’s physical and emotional trauma and may create additional hostility within her community towards her. Many girls undergo terrible injuries as a result of experiencing sexual activity, pregnancy and childbirth before their bodies are fully mature. Pregnancy-related death is the leading cause of mortality among girls aged 15 – 19 worldwide. Women in this age group face an increased risk of dying during their pregnancy between 20 – 200% compared with women aged 20 – 24 yrs.<sup>146</sup>

### **3.3.2. PSYCHOLOGICAL IMPACT**

Men who rape or sexually violate women not only attack individual women, they also attack women as a group, seeking to dominate and degrade them and render them powerless. Violence

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<sup>144</sup> See Zimmerman, *Liturgy as living Faith - A Liturgical Spirituality* London and Toronto: University of Scranton Press 1997:11.

<sup>145</sup> See Pickup Francine: *Ending Violence against Women: A challenge for development and humanitarian work*. Great Britain, Oxfam. 2001:97

<sup>146</sup> See UNICEF 2001.

against women in the community **instils** fear in other women. In this way violence can serve to control all women in a community. Where an attacker is an intimate partner or person who is trusted by the victim, violence can lead to feelings of confusion and despair. Sometimes it is likely that other women attempt suicide. Along with the experiencing of trauma, such as irritation, experiencing flash-backs and loneliness is also common. A woman who survived rape may also have changed her relationship with her body and with men. This not only has an effect on her psychological and physical health, but also on her fertility and sexuality.

Women survivors of rape always have a feeling of shame and guilt and frequently have mental block against speaking about rape. In these instances most of the time they experience stomach pains, they lose their appetite, have difficulty in concentrating and they cannot make contact with their families. They are aggressive to their children and this is very dangerous because they can harm innocent children. They always have a feeling of being separated from their bodies or there are those that feel the constant need to bathe them. All these feelings are in their minds and cause a disturbance within their daily routine. For that particular period of time they are not themselves until they receive some kind of psychological treatment or help.

This clearly shows that women suffer negative psychological consequences as a result of violence inflicted against them. It is difficult or impossible to separate these from the physical impacts of violence. The recognition of the psychological consequences of rape and the physical symptoms that it produces, led to the development of the term 'Rape Trauma Syndrome'<sup>147</sup>, while conceptualizing the psychological and physical effects of rape and sexual violence as Rape Trauma System is useful in raising awareness of the impact of violence.

- **RAPE TRAUMA SYNDROME**

***What influences how one reacts to rape?***

A survivor's individual response to rape, including whether and how she experience's Rape Trauma Syndrome, depends on many factors, including:

- *Whether she knew or trusted the rapist;*
- *Whether her family and friends are supportive and patient or blaming and unhelpful;*

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<sup>147</sup> See Pickup Francine 2001:100.

- *How the police and justice system treat her, should she choose to report the rape;*
- *Her age and previous life experiences;*
- *Her cultural and religious background;*
- *The degree of violence used by the rapist;*
- *Whether any injuries, illness, or disabilities result from the rape;*
- *Whether the rape brings up memories of past trauma she has experienced;*
- *Her emotional state prior to the rape;*
- *Her practical and material resource.*

Every rape situation is unique and it is thus, very important to treat each rape survivor individually.

- **PHYSICAL SYMPTOMS OF RAPE TRAUMA SYNDROME**

- *Shock: usually an immediate response; may include numbness, chills, faintness, confusion, disorientation, trembling, nausea, and sometimes vomiting;*
- *Sleeping problems: unable to sleep, sleeping more than usual, or other changes in sleeping patterns;*
- *Eating problems: no appetite and subsequent weight loss, or compulsive eating and subsequent weight gain;*
- *No energy or too much energy;*
- *Physical illness: the stress may weaken her immune system, and make her more vulnerable to sickness, she may have caught a sickness from the rapist, or she may simply feel sick;*
- *Pain in her body: this may be as a result of injuries inflicted by the rapist, or a physical reaction to her emotional pain;*
- *Cardiovascular problems: heart palpitations, breathlessness, tightness or pain in the chest, high blood pressure.*

### 3.3.3. SOCIAL IMPACT OF VIOLENCE ON WOMEN

Violence against women has a serious impact on women's ability to participate with their peers in social and economic activities. At community level, women who have survived violence may face rejection and social stigma. In societies that do not understand marital violence to be an abuse of women's rights, women who are known to be beaten or abused by their intimate partners are often blamed for bringing it on themselves. There is also a social stigma that surrounds women who have been abused. They have been shamed and should remain silent.

This violence affects all kinds of relationships that a woman has with other members of her community. Survivors of rape may be shunned or ostracized from their community or considered unmarriageable. In most communities women are often treated differently as a result of what has happened to them. Women are persecuted, hidden or become the object of curiosity. The women are blamed for what has happened to them and sometimes society excuses her feeling of being permanently branded and humiliated. It is as though society thinks it would be better if she had died<sup>148</sup>.

The fact that ideologies of fidelity in marriage are present in almost all societies in the world means that married women who are survivors of rape, often face rejection by their husbands, families and communities. Men who view the rape of female relatives as an attack on their status or property have been known to reject their wives, daughters or sisters.<sup>149</sup>

Survivors of rape are also very likely to have an acute fear of future violence. This fear extends beyond the individual survivors of violence to other women in the communities. Beyond the physical and mental harm caused directly as a result of violence, the experience of rape can drive women into poverty by preventing them from participating in educational and economic activities. By damaging women's and girls' confidence and making them scared to venture into public spaces, it can limit women's income-generating opportunities and this may leave them with few alternatives to marriage. In turn, this makes women more vulnerable to violence.

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<sup>148</sup> Media Zemica Women's Therapy Center 1997:8.

<sup>149</sup> See Thomas and Regan 1994.



### **3.4. CONCLUSION**

This chapter helped to understand the causes of family violence. It stated how it actually started and why. The chapter focused on two aspects namely: causes and complicating factors of family violence. Under the causes it discussed the underpinning factors such as social causes, economic causes, legal causes and political causes. It also discussed the complicating factors of family violence. All these factors gave some idea of what family violence is, how it came about and how a contribution can be made in combating family violence from a well-informed background.

Family violence is a societal problem of a huge scale throughout the world and it is a social ill of significant cost. These costs are particularly problematic for developing countries because they are impediments to further development and poverty alleviation. Gender violence can be partially attributed to cultural norms and values. These are linked inextricably to women's lack of economic power. The economic theory and the evidence presented in this chapter argue that women's economic status is the major determination of both the incidence and the severity of domestic violence. Factors that improve women's economic alternatives, wage equality, family support, and social services (including the availability of shelters, counselling, and job-training) – decrease the level of violence.

Therefore, the key to tackling domestic violence may seem to be in improving women's opportunities. In South Africa, a country with one of the highest levels of economic inequality in the world, incidents of violence against women have reached epidemic proportions. While new legislation is in place and some steps are being taken to improve women's economic position, certainly more can and should be done by government and civil society. Current policies and programmes should be monitored and evaluated for their impact on levels of economic inequality. There is also a need for more South African research on the incidents of violence against women, on the costs of violence against women on health, employment, law enforcement and judicial and welfare services, and on the impact of these on the economic development of this country. More indigenous evidence can only strengthen arguments for increased government and private sector spending on improving the status of women in South Africa and elsewhere. It is possible that more research needs to be done on this issue.

The next chapter will be looking at the question of how society could respond to the challenge of family violence in its attempt to reduce and combat the spread and increase of family violence in

our communities. It will investigate the contribution of structures dealing with family violence from different levels, e.g. internationally, nationally, provincial as well as local level.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### CONSIDERING POSSIBLE RESPONSES

#### 4.1. INTRODUCTION

The previous chapter on causes and complicating factors illustrated the negative effects of family violence on the individuals concerned, the family, the community where it is happening and the nation as a whole. This chapter will wrestle with the question of how society could respond to the problem, looking at ways and means that aim at reducing and even eradicating domestic violence in the African communities. These responses can come from different levels, different institutions as well as different angles. This chapter is going to be influenced by Tödt's third phase in his methodology of ethical decision-making. This phase actually follows the acceptance of the problem and a proper analysis of the situation with consideration of possible and appropriate action.

Mouton argues that such a response or reaction (i.e. what is to be considered as good and moral action or behaviour, which would lead to a good and moral decision) will essentially be determined by how the people involved understand themselves as human beings<sup>150</sup>. She further argues that people involve themselves in problem solving as human beings. According to Mouton people actually devise themselves, their own lives, characters and moral identity in the new way they design solutions to the challenges they have seen and accepted as their own.<sup>151</sup> Peoples' behaviour cannot be separated from who they are and what they want to be.

The big question that remains to be answered is what could the church's response to reduce or combat family violence be. For the church, in order to be able to respond to the question it will be very interesting to look at what other structures have done and how they have responded to the challenge of family violence. That kind of an approach will help the church to learn and begin to strategize and come up with a concrete plan to respond to

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<sup>150</sup> See Mouton, *Reading a New Testament document ethically: towards an accountable use of Scripture in Christian ethics, through analyzing the transformative potential of the Ephesians Epistle*. 1995:238

<sup>151</sup> Ibid. (cf. De Villiers and Smit 1995:6).

the challenge. The church must be seen and understood to be part of the community and as being constituted by some members of the civil society. The very people who are victims of the family violence are the same people who are members of the church. The reason why it is important to focus on the church in this chapter is because for most of the community members the church is always seen a symbol of hope and the site of struggle.

The next chapter will deal at length with the role that the church could play and why it is expected also to respond. Therefore, this chapter will investigate which structures are dealing with the challenge of family violence.

## **4.2. STRUCTURES DEALING WITH FAMILY VIOLENCE**

In its attempt to investigate the responses of other structures to the challenge of family violence this chapter will focus on the following structures: political structures (4.2.1.), punitive structures (4.2.2), reconciliatory structures (4.2.3), rehabilitative structures (4.2.4.), caring structure (4.2.5.) and formative structures (4.2.6.). These will not only focus on what is being done but also what the plans and intentions are to reduce or combat family violence in the country and our communities, as well as in our homes.

### **4.2.1. POLITICAL STRUCTURES**

As it is known, politics affect our daily lives and our daily activities. The previous chapter also referred to the political causes. Now it is also fitting to look at how the political structures have responded to the challenge of family violence and also looking at their plans as a response. By political structures we are referring to the states or governments as to what they are doing about the challenge of family violence, are there any policies in place. Under political structures the chapter will be looking at the international Community (4.2.1.1.), national Government (4.2.1.2.), and Provincial government (4.2.1.3) and how they implement the policies adopted by the National government.

#### **4.2.1.1. INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY**

The international community saw the issue of family violence as an international problem, and also made an attempt to respond to the issue of domestic violence. The United Nations called a conference that met in Beijing in 1995. This conference was specifically looking at some alternatives in which the governments, together with stakeholders can eliminate domestic

violence. Decisions were taken and adopted as an attempt to prevent and eliminate violence against women.

In this conference the question of family violence was declared as a criminal offence. States were challenged to investigate the causes of family violence and find ways of preventing as well as eliminate such actions. According to the decisions of the conference the perpetrators of family violence are supposed to be punished. This decision did not refer only to the individuals but also to the government officials. The conference recognized the fact that violence against women and children takes place in different places and in different forms. It happens at workplaces, in the homes and in the communities.

The conference encouraged the review of the legislation to ensure the effectiveness in attempt to eliminate family violence. Two important issues were identified that needed to be done to ensure just and effective remedy i.e. healing of the victims and rehabilitation of perpetrators. In this conference it was also encouraged that the international human rights be implemented as they related to violence against women. It was also emphasized that even those rights included in the International Convention on Civil Rights against Torture and other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment.

In other words the International community as its response to the challenge of family violence the conference emphasized that all the recommendation taken should be implemented. These recommendations were for prevention, protection and punishment if a need arises.

#### **4.2.1.2. NATIONAL COMMUNITY- “A policy on Family Violence”**

The national community meaning the South African government adopted a “Policy on Domestic Violence”<sup>152</sup> This section will examine the response of the South African government to the challenge of family violence. The Policy on Domestic Violence will be used as the source for this process. This policy was drafted by the government and circulated to other stake holders for comment. This policy was adopted as the Act which was known as the “Prevention of Family Violence Act 133 of 1993”

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<sup>152</sup> This will basically look at the Domestic Violence Act that was adopted by the South African government in 1993, as a response to the challenge facing the country.

Until recently in South Africa, it was widely accepted by both the academic sector and non-governmental organizations that the Criminal justice system has dealt ineffectively with the domestic violence<sup>153</sup> and in a manner that marginalized and dismissed the severity of gender-based violence. Such that domestic violence remained behind closed doors, until recently, when it has come to the fore through lobbying by women's group and social and legal activists.

The Prevention of Family Violence Act 133 of 1993 was the first attempt by the legislature to deal specifically with domestic violence.<sup>154</sup> This act was seen as severely limited and as a result of lobbying from various sectors dissatisfied with the act the South African Law Commission launched a project to investigate domestic violence. A team of experts was chosen from the non-governmental sector, the magistracy, private law firms and academia, and was put together to devise a new Act that would give effect to the concerns of the lobbying.

The team was tasked with remedying all the shortcomings of the Prevention of Family Violence Act. Only individuals who are or were married, by civil or customary law, or those in common law marriages could access the interdict. This meant that many people in relationships, like dating couples not living together and same sex partners, had to find recourse in other legal remedies. The Act also did not define domestic violence and judicial offices exercised wide discretion in determining what behaviour, constituted abuse. Tackling these problems, the team produced a draft legislation based on the understanding that domestic violence is linked to financial, psychological and other social issues, as well as to divorce, custody and maintenance. This was fast tracked by the then Minister of Justice, Dullah Omar and Deputy Minister Manto Tshabalala, through Parliament, in order to be ready for the elections in 1999. The act underwent a number of metamorphoses – but finally, the Domestic Violence Act 116 of 1998, in current form, was assented to on 28 November 1998 and became operational in 1999.

The Domestic Violence Act was passed with the aim of affording victims of domestic violence the maximum protection from domestic abuse that the law can provide. The act attempted to introduce obligations on relevant organs of the state-aided role players in order to eliminate domestic violence. The preamble of the Act acknowledges the unacceptable levels of domestic

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<sup>153</sup> See Lillian Artz, Penny Parenzee and Kelly Moulton, *Monitoring the implementation of the Domestic Violence Act First Research Report* 2001:2.

<sup>154</sup> See Prevention Family Violence Act. 133 of 1993.

violence in South Africa. There is also the recognition that the victims of domestic violence are among the most vulnerable members of the society.

The act recognizes that domestic violence takes many forms and may be committed in a wide range of domestic relationships. During this act of violence women may suffer undue hardship as a result of such abuse, if a protection order is not issued immediately.

The interim order that was prepared only specified a date (not less than 10 days after service on the abuser) on which the perpetrator must appear in court to argue why a final protection order should not be issued. The interim order together with a copy of the record of the proceedings was to be issued to the abuser. Until served on him, an interim order has no force or effect. After service on the abuser, the woman must receive a certified copy of the interim order together with an original suspended warrant of arrest. All these were the procedures that were to be followed if a victim had to apply for the protection order.

#### **4.2.1.3. PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT**

The Provincial community here refers to the Provincial government. Provincial government also had a contribution in terms of responding to the challenge of family violence. The provinces were given a mandate by the National government as its response to this challenge. The mandate of the Provincial Government as a response to the problem was clearly stated in the Government Gazette of the South African Republic. The instruction of the National Government to the Provincial governments was that they should implement and monitor the policies passed by the national assembly with regard to domestic violence. According to the Government Gazette all the responsibilities are bestowed on the station commander of the police. These responsibilities are stated categorically as follows<sup>155</sup>:

- ❖ “Every station commissioner must, with local representatives of the Department of Welfare, the local Community Police Forum and any other relevant local institution, work to identify local organizations which are willing and able to provide counselling and other support services (including medical services and suitable shelter) to complainants.”

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<sup>155</sup> See the Government Gazette section on Domestic Violence.

- ❖ After having identified the organizations referred to in subparagraph (1), the station commissioner must liaise with the said organizations to determine needs and strategies. This will enable them to respond to such challenges.
- ❖ The station commissioner must compile a data of the relevant organizations and include in it, in respect of each organization, at least the information referred to in subparagraph (2), as well as information relating to hospitals, ambulance services and medical treatment to complainants.
- ❖ The original list referred to in subparagraph (3) must be kept by the station commissioner who must update it at least once every six months.
- ❖ The station commissioner must take into account the unique circumstance prevailing in his or her specific station area, and look for available resources.
- ❖ “Where a police station area forms part of a larger area consisting of more than one police station area and a radio control unit has been established to patrol and attend to complaints, in such a larger area, every station commissioner of a station, in such larger area, must, for information purposes, provide the commander of such radio control unit with a copy of the updated version thereof.”

The government did not only put in place policies for security measures in protecting violence against women, it also established the Independent Complaints Directorate (I.C.D)

This section on political structures assisted with the information on how the international community, National Government and the Provincial Government responded to the challenge of family violence. The international community had a responsibility of drafting policies which prevented and protected women and children from family violence as well as prescribing policy for the punishment of the perpetrators. The National government was given a mandate by the international conference, of monitoring the implementation of those policies. It also had responsibilities of making laws and acts to prevent family violence. Lastly, the provinces had a responsibility of implementing and also monitoring those policies and acts. The next section will deal with the punitive structures.

#### **4.2.2. PUNITIVE STRUCTURES**

This section will be dealing primarily with the institutions that give judgment to the cases related to family violence. It will be looking at the Department of Safety and Security (4.2.2.1.), by taking the South African Police Service as an example and focusing on their response to family violence; and secondly, Justice Ministry and their response to family violence(4.2.2.2.)



#### 4.2.2.1. SAFETY AND SECURITY'S RESPONSE

Now that violence against women is understood in South Africa, as a criminal issue, the Department of Safety and Security who is responsible for the South African Police Service, has been tasked with developing effective responses to the problem. Lisa Vetten argues that S.A.P.S. has been heavily criticized for the manner in which it has traditionally dealt with violence against women; and has displayed insensitivity, ignorance and hostility to victims of rape and domestic violence.<sup>156</sup> The Department committed itself to the problem of violence against women, to develop policies and to ensure that there is effective policing occurring within communities. These commitments at cabinet level, included developing and conducting violence-prevention educational programmes in communities. These programmes helped to develop professional codes for police officers when dealing with women who were subject to violence and to protect girls and women from violence by actively enforcing laws against violence and prosecuting perpetrators of violence. Furthermore, it assisted in taking measures to punish state officials who committed acts of violence against women and children.<sup>157</sup>

If one looks very closely at the Domestic Violence Act, one will observe that it has effectively ensured that domestic violence is now the responsibility of the police.<sup>158</sup> The provisions of the Act place direct responsibility on police officers, to inform women about their rights and also to assist them to access services. These include informing women of their rights to lay criminal charges against the abuser, assisting women to obtain shelter and medical care and supplying a protective escort to women wishing to collect their belongings from the homes shared with the abuser. One of their responsibilities which they have to carry out is to do away with the perception that domestic violence cases are not worthy of police intervention. Police were to be trained in order to deal with the cases of rape and domestic violence.

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<sup>156</sup> See Lisa Vetten, , Article 'Paper Promises Protest and Petitions, South African State and Civil Society Responses to Violence Against Women', In a *Reclaiming Women's Space*, (Eds.) Yoon Jung Park, Joanne Fiddler and Zubeda Dangor. 2000:95. They made use of Human Rights Watch, 1995. Stanton, Lochrenberg and Musaka 1994, 'Justice for Sexual Assault Survivors?' Rondebosch: Institute of Criminology, University of Cape Town.

<sup>157</sup> See Deputy Minister for Welfare and Population Development, Geraldine Fraser-Moleketsi, 22 February 1996, at Conference of Commitments.

<sup>158</sup> See Domestic Violence Act 116 of 1998.

The first step taken by police in response to domestic violence, is to open a criminal case of assault against a man who has assaulted a woman. This criminalization of domestic violence serves a symbolic purpose: it indicates the moral non-acceptability of domestic violence. Hoyle and Sanders argue that another purpose of criminalization is to enable the state to intervene. They both agree that it is usually done by prosecuting in order to exact retribution, produce specific deterrence and perhaps, treat the offender respectfully, thereby reducing offending in a more constructive way<sup>159</sup>. This can be seen also as geared to crime reduction and usually in this process, prosecution is the first step. Criminalization needs standard punishment for all offences.

The question of criminalizing domestic violence may have its advantages and disadvantages, both to the victim and to the perpetrator. Domestic violence is different from most crimes. If the main purpose of a domestic violence criminal is to set standards and to reduce future violence, it may be that prosecution is, in many cases, not merely unnecessary but also counterproductive. It is always observed that, for instance, police support for the victim is geared to sustain her commitment to the prosecution effort; it is not always about protecting her from further violence. It is not always clear whether prosecution will make matters worse or better for the victim, or what can be done to protect the victim. People who claim this criticize what the police are doing as their response to domestic violence.

First, again, as a response by the police, there has been an introduction of ‘pro-arrest’ policies; and secondly, the establishment of domestic violence units and domestic violence officers have been established<sup>160</sup>. There are policies that were introduced in an attempt to make the police’s response to domestic violence more effective, where the assumption was that effectiveness is to be measured in terms of criminal justice sanctions. Hoyle found, as have many researchers before her, that the majority of victims of domestic violence either refused to make statements or withdrew statements soon after making them<sup>161</sup>. The cases in which women did not want to testify, hardly ever resulted in a prosecution. Both police officers and prosecutors have critically looked at how the criminal justice system deals with domestic violence. It seemed that in cases of domestic violence there was a working rule shared by police, that the victim’s withdrawal or by the victim not cooperating, marked the end of the case.

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<sup>159</sup>See *The Journal of Criminology*, 2000. No.40:14.

<sup>160</sup> Hereafter referred to Domestic Violence Unit’s and Domestic Violence Officer’s respectively.

<sup>161</sup> Hoyle. 1998.

In the past it has been a difficult time for some women and they always complained that their problems could not be solved by the criminal justice system. This does not mean that things have changed; there still women who are struggling to get their cases resolved. Different women have different aims and needs and therefore call police for different, although often overlapping reasons. Prosecution as the only option is particularly unhelpful. Most women feel that the arrest of perpetrators only makes a little difference.

#### **4.2.2.2. JUSTICE MINISTRY**

The Justice Department has demonstrated issues of violence against women as one of its main concern. Since 1994, there have been a number of changes within the department. These changes are also effecting commitments. Lisa Vetten mentions one of these changes and looks at the legislative reform in the area of violence against women.<sup>162</sup> In 1985 the South African Law Commission (SALC) compiled a discussion document around sexual offences. This was a conservative document. According to Lisa Vetten, SALC declined to lift the marital rape exemption, or the cautionary rule around sexual offences.<sup>163</sup>

The findings of The Consortium on Violence against Women are being used here to strengthen the argument.<sup>164</sup> The research project focused on the role of the magistrate in domestic violence cases. This has been used as a source of information, because the Consortium deals with the issues of violence against women and children, trying to identify the causes and how they can make a contribution.

Artz argues that the duties of the magistrate in domestic violence cases are set out both in the Domestic Violence Act and the Regulations of the Act.<sup>165</sup> The duty of the magistrate, who is the presiding officer in district and regional courts, is to listen to both sides in a legal dispute and to

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<sup>162</sup> See Lisa Vetten Article, 'Paper Promises, Protests and Petitions, South African State and Civil Society Responses to Violence Against Women' 2000: 96.

<sup>163</sup> See Lisa Vetten 2000:96.

<sup>164</sup>. This is based at the Institute of Criminology at the University of Cape Town; they are working together with the Gender Project, Community Law Center, and University of the Western Cape, Rape Crises Cape Town Health Sector and Gender Violence. In this specific project they were investigating the topic on 'Magistrates and the domestic violence Act: Issues of Interpretation'

<sup>165</sup> See Artz, L. 2003:3.

make a decision. The magistrates are expected to make informed decisions, for instance, in cases such as:

- Where a complainant applies for a protection order in terms of the Domestic Violence Act, and whether there are sufficient grounds to issue an order.
- Where the perpetrator of domestic violence is charged with a criminal offence relating to abuse, and whether he/she should be found guilty or not.

### **4.2.3. RECONCILIATORY STRUCTURES**

It is the desire of the structures that deal with domestic violence, to be reconciliatory in their approach. The justification for this preference is that domestic violence involves conflict between intimate partners who may not want the relationship to terminate. Statutory structures such as law, the police and the courts are excluded from this category because they are confrontational. Under this section, the response of the following structures will be investigated: Non-Governmental Organizations (4.2.3.1.), Soul City (4.2.3.2.), Families (4.2.3.3.), and community structures such as Street Committees/Zone (4.2.3.4.). Religious sectors such as churches will be classified as reconciliatory. The church's response will be dealt with in the next chapter as a separate body, for several reasons.

#### **4.2.3.1. NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS**

The country has a number of non-governmental organizations operating under different mandates, some having been established to assist women to fight hunger and poverty and to help them exercise their rights through the law. There are a few organizations that are dealing with violence against women but for the purpose of this thesis Soul City will be used as an example.

#### **4.2.3.2. SOUL CITY**

The intention here is not to give the history of the organization, but instead the focus will be on their response to violence against women. Soul City is the Institution for Health and Development Communication(IHDC). Its main objective is to campaign to ensure the speedy and effective implementation of the Domestic Violence Act (DVA).

In 1999 Soul City and the National Network on Violence against Women (NNVAW) conducted a successful advocacy campaign to ensure the speedy and effective implementation of Domestic

Violence Act.<sup>166</sup> The fourth series of Soul City dealt in a large part with the issues of gender-based violence for the details of series.<sup>167</sup>

When Soul City was preparing for the fourth series they discovered that there was a major gap in legislation about assisting abused women to take action on the abuse they suffered. However, despite the potential for the legislation to remove major structural barriers, preventing abused women taking action, there were unacceptable delays in the implementation of the new DVA. Therefore, Soul City IHDC, together with the National Network on Violence against Women (NNVAW)<sup>168</sup> embarked on a partnership to ensure the speedy and effective implementation of DVA. The members of the NNVAW are currently monitoring the implementation of the Act to ensure that it works effectively.

The campaign that Soul City embarked on used a range of advocacy tools, including lobbying, news media and social mobilization. Building on the popularity and emotions generated by the storyline of Soul City dramas, the NNVAW coordinated an extensive social mobilization campaign, which helped pressurize government to implement the new legislation.<sup>169</sup> This advocacy campaign involved training for the NNVAW members in advocacy skills and also national and provincial advocacy related activities. These took place throughout the broadcasting of the fourth series.

Soul City produced a resource booklet on Violence against Women, and this was developed for journalists to enhance and improve the level of media coverage given to the issues. Soul City worked in partnership like NNVAW, with the Institute for the Advancement of Journalism and the Commission on Gender Equality.

#### **4.2.3.3. THE FAMILY**

The definition of *usapho* (family) here comprises of both the *makoti's* (woman) and the *umkhwenyana's* (man) as family members. In an African culture even those who are representing both families in the process of negotiations for the marriage called *onozakuzaku*, automatically become part of the family. *Usapho* in this context can also be referred to as an extended family, the descendents from a common ancestor. *Usapho* in a Black African culture is the most

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<sup>166</sup> See the section on violence against women from Soul City website: [www.soulcity.org.za](http://www.soulcity.org.za).

<sup>167</sup> See Soul City Report: 2004.

<sup>168</sup> NNVAW is a national coalition of grassroots and activist from both rural and urban South Africa.

<sup>169</sup> See, Soul City document on violence against women. (updated 26 August 2004:1)

immediate justice (*ubulungisa*) delivery structure for many. Justice (*ubulungisa*) is the concept that will be dealt with more deeply in the next chapter. It is commonly understood that the first point of call when domestic problems arise between couples, is *umkhwenyana's* (man) family and not the *makoti's* (woman) family.

It is in those rare cases where the woman's family is approached first, that they are obliged to come and report the matter to the man's family and together the two families would try to find the perpetrator of violence. Families are calling one another to put together their ideas in assisting the couples in building their family in the spirit of reconciliation. This concept is influenced by a Xhosa idiom, which says "*isandla sihlamba esinye*" which literally translated means: "one hand washes another", meaning assisting one another. There is none that can actually solve his or her problem without the assistance of the other. It is here where the notion of "*umntu ngumntu ngabantu*" comes from. This literally means that a person is not a person if he or she is in isolation; we need one another whether in sorrow or joy, suffering or wealth or in times of conflict or peace.

Setiloane G.M. explores this concept further when he explains it by looking at the origin of Man (Person). He argues that Man to use his words is never considered in the African myth on the origin of Man as having come into being singly. He is represented as having come into visible existence in company with others; other people, wives, children and animals for that matter, in other words in community. This gives a basis for the African view that a person is within a community "*Motho ke Motho ka batho* "a person is a person through other people.<sup>170</sup>

When speaking to a few women, in those rare cases where the woman's family is approached first, they are obliged to come and report the matter to the man's family. If the matter is reported the two families will try to resolve the problem by talking to the perpetrator of the violence. Some women refuted the claim that their families had that much say in cases of marital disputes. They attributed this to the status of married women who are regarded as having become part of their husband's family. They indicated that only their husband's families have authority to chastise and

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<sup>170</sup> Gabriel M. Setiloane is a Minister of the Methodist Church of South Africa. He was the secretary of the Swiss " Suid Africa Mission "in Biel Switzerland at the time when he wrote this book. He elaborated on this proverb "*Motho ke Motho ka Batho* "when he was writing an article for the journal of theology for South Africa. The title was 'Confessing Christ Today from one African Perspective Man in Community' September 1975: 31 no. 12

warn their sons against wrongful action. Even in those instances where the woman's family is involved in attempting to settle the dispute, there is an imbalance in the authority of the families.

By custom the two families assemble at the husband's home with the husband's father presiding over the deliberations. The power of the women's in-laws is further argued by the patrilocality of the matrimonial home. Amongst women it is argued that even if they were to approach their families, they would only be attended to by their mothers who often can do no more than comfort them. One woman whom I interviewed said: "*ekhaya bathethe nam baze bandomeleza*" (at home they talk to me and comfort me). There after, the woman is persuaded to return to her marital home and to her husband.

The potential subjectivity of the man's family also makes women reluctant to approach them for redress. Women feel that the decision to report or not to report to their in-laws, is influenced by whether the in-laws accept them and love them as their son's wife. One woman stated if your in-laws fully accept you, chances that your grievances will be resolved amicably are great. This statement clearly shows that women perceive their chances of receiving an impartial hearing as dependent on the positive relationship they have with their in-laws.

In conclusion to the matter, although the family might be considered an immediate structure that mediates in cases dealing with domestic violence, problems are associated with it. The family does not necessarily imply accessibility. The requirement that the report must be made to the man's mother sometimes stifles the quest for *ubulungisa* (justice). In cases of this nature, rather than being an entry point in the process of acquiring *ubulungisa* (justice), the mother in-law is responsible for directly inhibiting the progress of the matter. Family, whether the man's or the *makoti's* family, fails women victims of domestic violence. This is partly due to the over emphasis on perseverance and the need to keep the family's dirty linen from being exposed. This alone works against the victim of the violence and her quest for *ubulungisa*.

If one looks very close at these cases, the decisive word is that of the authoritative family members who are mostly male or sometimes from the man's family. Even in those cases where the family adjudicates over the matter fairly, that alone does not ensure that *ubulungisa* will be delivered. To a certain degree the family is not capable of settling the case of domestic violence, especially when the perpetrator is aware of the family's relatively powerlessness, there will be nothing stopping him from continuing with his behaviour. Finally, there is an argument that the

absence of “teeth” to enforce decision effectively, constitutes the limitations of the family’s power as a justice delivery structure and renders the structure unable to deliver justice to its users.<sup>171</sup>

#### 4.2.3.4. COMMUNITY

Dealing with community structures I will limit myself to the civil society, zone leaders or street committees.<sup>172</sup> The townships in black and coloured communities are divided into zones or sections and in each zone or section there are streets. In each zone or area there are leaders that are elected by people to lead the people (*abantu*), responding to the needs of *abantu*. These leaders are elected for a specific period of time and are responsible for the administration of the area. This administration includes, amongst other tasks, the maintenance of law and order in that particular area. This has nothing to do with other formal and official government structures and it also does not interfere with government structures, but rather assists, though it is voluntarily work.

These leaders also play an important role in the resolution of domestic disputes including those that involve domestic violence. These leaders are very strong and pro-active and they do not tolerate crime in their areas, including acts of domestic violence. They facilitate an effective community police service that deals with any criminal elements in the community. If the cases, whether domestic violence or any other matter are reported, it is seldom found that people are not co-operating, because they know very well that they can easily be rejected and excluded in the activities within that particular area by *abantu*.

The structure is most effective in addressing domestic violence issues because they regard themselves as the third family after the man’s family and the woman’s family. That alone enables them to address family issues. In cases where the victim is injured, the street leaders or zone leaders always advise the complainant to go and report the incident to the police. Sometimes they offer counselling which is an important aspect towards reconciling the two parties involved in the conflict.

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<sup>171</sup> Women and law in Southern Africa Research and Education Trust advanced this argument. The report is contained on their study project called ‘Multiple jeopardy: Domestic Violence and women’s search for justice in Swaziland’

<sup>172</sup> Street committees is referring to a small group of people that forms a committee representing the whole street or zone with the aim of attending to the problems affecting that particular section of the community. This group has powers to act and its decisions are honoured and respected by its constituency.



The zones or street leaders' structures perceive themselves as both entitled and capable of determining the matters of domestic violence. Their main aim is to reconcile the parties involved in domestic violence. In carrying out this function the structure regards itself as having replaced the traditional structure of the family.

#### **4.2.4. REHABILITATIVE STRUCTURES**

Over the past years there has been a move by governments around the world, including that of South Africa, to de-emphasize the punitive and retributive nature of sentences – especially those involving prison terms. The government preferred to concentrate on the correction of criminal offenders for their own benefit and the benefit of the society as a whole. This effort has been made to develop appropriate structures to facilitate this process. The idea being, that while in detention, offenders undergo rehabilitation programmes. These programmes will eliminate their criminal tendencies and allow them, upon their release, to return to society as responsible and productive citizens. In this section, NICRO is selected as the model of rehabilitation structure that assists perpetrators. The focus will be on the work done by NICRO around the Western Cape.

##### **4.2.4.1. NICRO: THE REHABILITATION STRUCTURE**

NICRO stands for National Institute for Crime Prevention and Reintegration of Offenders. Among the programmes that they are offering, they offer the PDV programme.<sup>173</sup> This programme in the Western Cape only meets two of the criteria set out by NICRO, i.e. perpetrator and partner groups. The programme has not trained criminal justice personnel or developed formal partnership with other organizations.<sup>174</sup>

- **PERPETRATOR GROUP**

Around the Western Cape there are three perpetrator groups running over a period of 16 weeks for two hours per session. There are two categories of these groups. There are closed ones and open ones. The participants on this programme are offenders referred to by the criminal courts. Both groups, however, dealt with an educational aspect on domestic violence and socialization,

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<sup>173</sup> PDV means Perpetrators of Domestic Violence.

<sup>174</sup> See the report on Formative evaluation of Nicro Perpetrators of Domestic Violence final report July 2004.

creating self-awareness, anger and conflict management skills as well as skills to assist them to create healthy, safe relationships. Again, towards the end of the programme, power and control are also addressed.

- **THE PARTNER GROUP**

This group is for the victims of domestic violence. The content of the training in this group focuses on sharing experiences and also raising awareness around domestic violence issues. The partner group is aimed at empowering women with knowledge of their rights and interpersonal and communication skills. The groups were based on the underpinning belief that domestic violence can be reduced, or even stopped, if women were empowered with knowledge and skills and were aware of the choices available to them.<sup>175</sup>

- **PARTNERSHIPS**

The team recognizes the importance of partnership because they approached SANCA, requesting them to be involved in the PDV programme. The team is actually planning to establish network contacts with other organizations, rather than partnerships e.g. with FAMSA, Department of Social Development, MOSAIC, Planned Parenthood and the Khayelitsha and Kuils River Men's group. They hope to establish a database which entails the services which other organizations are offering perpetrators and to share information and referrals. They only plan to form partnerships to address very specific needs within the PDV programme.

- **EXPECTED OUTCOMES**

The aims of the perpetrator groups are to provide a rehabilitation option for courts to hold perpetrators accountable. The vision of the team is to stop domestic violence completely. The objectives of the Western Cape programme include:

- “ To educate and challenge male participants regarding their understanding and attitudes of domestic violence, including issues around power and control
- To address responsibility and accountability and to assist with the attendance of perpetrators at all sessions.

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<sup>175</sup> See report on Perpetrators of Domestic Violence 2004:61.

- To empower perpetrators with skills such as:
  1. Anger management.
  2. How to control their anger and use alternatives when dealing with conflict.
  3. How to identify and control problems
  4. Decision-making skills
  5. How anger roles are learnt through the process of socialization
  6. The use and abuse of power”<sup>176</sup>.

It is assumed that if all the structures within our communities can work hand-and-glove with one another in programmes, as an attempt to eradicate domestic violence actions, it would be reduced. It is also disappointing to note that from this report the justice system’s commitment is questionable. “The Western Cape facilitators were generally hesitant to refer participants back to court because they felt that the courts tended not to hold them accountable.”<sup>177</sup> This problem was actually identified when the perpetrators were not attending their sessions as expected. If there are no co-operation from all parties involved, it means that there we will never achieve success in our fight against domestic violence.

This section actually looked at the rehabilitative structures. Nicro was identified as one example of the rehabilitative structure and it was used as the source for this section. The next section will be investigating the role that is and can be played by caring structures.

#### **4.2.5. CARING STRUCTURES**

Hospitals will be used as one example of a caring structure. This caring is referred to as physical healing of the victims. It is where the victims come for assessment. This section seeks to investigate how hospitals display a caring responsibility.

- **HOSPITALS**

In this section we will focus only on the response of the health department. The structures that will be referred to are hospitals and clinics. This is for all practical intents and purpose and it is a conduit through which seekers of justice in domestic violence cases must pass. However, medical treatment for wounds and injuries are not sufficient in this case, because it addresses the physical manifestation of the violence. These are always seen as just one aspect of the overall problem. What is necessary, in addition, are mechanisms such as support services within the

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<sup>176</sup> See the Report of PDV 2004:64

<sup>177</sup> See the report from Nicro 2004:70

structures that provide professional counselling so as to address the other underlying factors of the violence and to provide more conclusive resolution to domestic violence cases. It is in this context that the role their personnel play are discussed, under reconciliatory structures.

In the first place, victims of domestic violence approach hospitals and clinics when they come for medical treatment of injuries sustained when such violence erupts in the home. The hospital/clinic personnel referred to are doctors and nurses. In the process of administering treatment they are sometimes taken into confidence by their patients about the causes of their injuries and they usually find that they are counselling their patients.

In the interviews with the nurses at the general hospital they admitted that women patients do tell them the real causes of their injuries and also their domestic problems from which such injuries results. However, nurses also pointed out the requirement that an assault victim should come to the hospital with a police form<sup>178</sup> before they can be treated. In the same interview it was reported that in most cases women do not want to report their husbands. The nurses, seeing their need for medical attention, end up treating them even when they do not have the police form.

The second interview was with the doctor who is a general practitioner, the purpose of which was to try and understand his response to the problem. In our conversation he told me that he usually cautions his patients not to rush into reporting her husband to the police. Instead, he mediates by calling her husband in talk to him and telling him to stop the abuse. By attempting to discuss and solve the problem between the two parties in this way, without referring it to the police, the hospital personnel assume the role of mediator, for the purposes of reconciliation. Despite the doctor's tentative mediation role, another function of hospitals and clinics are to provide the necessary evidence of domestic violence in criminal trials.<sup>179</sup> The doctor interviewed confirmed that he had been to court on several occasions to testify during the prosecution of domestic violence.

Hospitals and clinics constitute an important part of the structure because victims of domestic violence need to receive medical attention and treatment for their injuries. The very same victims, out of necessity, approach this structure for this type of assistance. The operations of this

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<sup>178</sup> This police form shows that the victim to the police has reported the assault case. It also reflects the case number that the doctors can refer to it when they write their reports.

<sup>179</sup> In addition to medical examination certificates, where a criminal prosecution has been initiated medical personnel are called upon to testify about the presence and extent of injuries sustained by a victim of domestic violence.

structure are somewhat constrained by the attitude of this category of patients as they only want to be treated for their injuries but do not want, for a number of reasons, to take the matter further. This puts the personnel of this structure in a difficult situation because on the one hand they are required by law, to demand a police report showing that the crime has been reported before treating the patient. On the other hand, victims who are their patients are reluctant to report the incident to the police, but consult them about the extent of their injuries which require immediate medical attention.

As much as this is a good gesture for the immediate needs of the victims of domestic violence, it may have regrettable long-term consequences whereby the violence continues unabated and the patient returns over and over again. It may not be the same institution's personnel, but the fact is that the victim's problem would not have been dealt with, only the symptoms would of dealt with.

#### **4.2.6. FORMATIVE STRUCTURES**

This section on formative structure looks at the formation of a person and also where and how the person's life is changed and influenced. It will investigate how formative structures respond to the challenge of family violence. One example that will be used is that of the Department of Education. There are two questions of interest on this subject that will be investigated – firstly, how does the department manage sexual violence (4.2.6.1)? And secondly, how do they measure their success (4.2.6.2)?

- **DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION**

Under the Department of Education we will look at how the department manages sexual violence and what the measurable achievements are. The department of education recognized the fact that women have been subordinated throughout their lives. They saw a need to ensure that gender equality was taken into consideration in their department. The Department of Education recognized this by including principles of gender equality in a number of its policies. In 1996 the Minister of Education had to find a way of carrying out these policies by appointing a Gender Equality Task Team.<sup>180</sup> This was the first step towards responding to the issue of gender violence within the department of education.

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<sup>180</sup> The first person to be appointed as the first minister in a new democratic South Africa was Prof. Bhengu and he knew the vision of the new constitution in terms of gender equality. The terms of reference for this

The Gender Equality Task Team (GETT) identified the following issues as its aims and objectives as the advisory unit:

- Identify means of correcting gender imbalances
- Imbalances in enrolments, dropouts, subject choice, career paths and performance.
- Advise on the educational and social desirability and legal implications of single-sex schools.
- Propose guidelines to address sexism in curricula, textbooks, teaching and guidance.
- Propose affirmative action strategies for increasing the representation of women in professional leadership and management positions, and for increasing the influence and authority of women leaders.
- Propose a strategy to counter and eliminate sexism, sexual harassment and gender violence throughout the education system.
- To develop close relations with the organized teaching profession, organized student bodies, the Education Labour Relations Council, and national women's organizations whose cooperation would be essential in pursuing the aims of the unit.<sup>181</sup>

- **MANAGING SEXUAL VIOLENCE IN SCHOOLS**

A school-based module on managing sexual harassment and gender-based violence has been developed. The module is said to be divided into eight workshops and it covers aspects such as: gender violence and sexual harassment, homophobia, abuse of learners, school policy on sexual harassment, school management teams, gender and HIV/AIDS, counselling and healing.<sup>182</sup>

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task team were to 'investigate and advise the department of education on the establishment of a permanent Gender Equality Unit in the Department.'

<sup>181</sup> All these aims and objectives are contained on the GETT document these aims and objectives were formulated in cooperation with the provincial Departments of Education, through the Heads of Education Departments Committee (HEDCOM); [www.education.gov.za](http://www.education.gov.za).

<sup>182</sup> See the Document on Department of Education's response to Domestic Violence 2003.

- **MEASURABLE ACHIEVEMENTS**

- Gender sensitive policies have been developed.
- Housing allowances, pension benefits, medical allowances are accessible to women educators, irrespective of marital status.
- Women are now eligible to occupy any position for which they may suitably qualify, (this refers to the Employment Equity Act)
- Programmes for women in management and leadership positions have been developed.
- Adult Basic Education and Training (ABET) programmes are in place to address the needs of women who were denied their rights to education and employment by the legacy of the past.
- Programmes for Men against Women Abuse are in place. The departmental Men's Forum addresses the issues of gender-based violence against women and girls.

#### **4.3. CONCLUSION**

In conclusion, the whole chapter has investigated the responses of different institutions around the issue of family violence. The chapter summarized its findings in four sections namely: the political structures, punitive structures, reconciliatory structures, rehabilitative structures, caring structures and formative structures. Under the political structures the chapter discussed the international communities' response to family violence and the source for this; the recommendations of the Beijing Conference were used and the countries present at this conference were expected to implement these recommendations. The national community referred to the South African government, what it intended to do and the policies around safety and security, as well as Justice Ministry Legislation, were discussed.

It also looked at the responses of punitive structures, the Department of Safety and Security, through the South African Police Service implementing the policies adopted by National Government, and the Justice Ministry, also assessing the cases and passing judgments. Thirdly, it looked at reconciliatory structures, the civil societies' role e.g., NGO's, community, family, and other institutions. Lastly, it looked at rehabilitative structures and correctional services and Nicro was used as the source for this section. This does not mean that the problem is solved, a lot still needs to be done because the problem is still there.

The next chapter will be investigating the church's contribution to combat family violence. It will be looking at the 'Calling of the Church – *A theology of ukuzinikela*' (commitment). It will investigate the role that the church can play, in an effort to combat family violence. The chapter will follow D.J. Smit's approach, that he developed in his definition of the church. The following will be used as the methodology to offer what the church could do from different levels i.e. church as congregation; worship; Christian believers; volunteers; denomination; and ecumenical church.



## CHAPTER FIVE

### CALLING OF THE CHURCH – *A theology of ukuzinikela (Commitment)*

#### 5.1. INTRODUCTION

The previous chapter dealt with the possible responses to the challenge of family violence. It attempted to examine the policies that both the: International community and the National government of South Africa developed action against family violence. It also looked at how these policies were implemented by the Provincial government and local government. The chapter once again focused on different institutions that are responding to the question of family violence and different structures that implemented the policies from different angles e.g. the reconciliatory structures, rehabilitative structures, preventative structures as well as punitive structures. This chapter will attempt to investigate the action of the church. What is the church doing and what could the church do about the challenge of family violence?

Is there no word for the church from God's instruction that God gave to Jeremiah when He called him? He said: "Today I give you authority over nations and kingdoms to uproot and pull down, to destroy and to overthrow, to build and to plant"<sup>183</sup> This was the word that launched him into a programme of action to do things on God's behalf and to prophesy God's will to the people of Israel. The era and the time of Jeremiah has come and passed. God called us the church, as God's children and He gave us the same authority over the nations; He gave us a duty to oversee God's flock, to build and to plant. This chapter will be wrestling with the question of the church's task or response to the challenge and trying to understand the meaning of the concept 'the church'. Koopman suggests that in investigating the role of the church Smit's identification of six forms of the church might be helpful.<sup>184</sup> Therefore, the whole chapter will follow Smit's meaning of the church in an attempt to understand what the church can do about the challenge of family violence. Ecclesiology, according to Smit, can mean different things to different people and can refer to different realities.<sup>185</sup> This means that what one understands to be the meaning of the church may

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<sup>183</sup> See Jeremiah 1:10, Holy Bible.

<sup>184</sup> See Nico Koopman, 'Theology and the fulfillment of social and economic rights. Some theoretical consideration' In *Theories of Social and Economic Justice* (ed.) Sun Press, Stellenbosch. South Africa (2005:9). In this article Koopman refers us to the work of Smit where he identifies these different forms of the church as congregation, worship service, denomination, ecumenical church, Christian believers and volunteers, see Smit 'Oor die kerk as unieke samemewingsverband' in *Tydskrif vir Geesteswetenskappe* 36 Junie 1996:119-129.

<sup>185</sup> See Dirkie Smit 'On the Impact of the Church in South Africa after the collapse of Apartheid Regime' in *A new day dawning African Christians living the gospel Essays in honor of Dr. J.J.(Hans) Visser* (eds.)

mean something different for someone else. Therefore, this chapter will follow his framework and model of the church i.e. the congregation, worship, Christian believers, volunteers, denomination and the ecumenical church.

## 5.2. THE CONGREGATION – *Embodying ubulungisa*<sup>186</sup>

Here the question of how the church as the congregation can make a contribution as a response to the challenge of family violence will be discussed. This section will also investigate how the congregation can embody *ubulungisa*.

In understanding the concept ‘church’, Smit argues that many people view the local congregation as a place gathered for worship and celebration and for mutual fellowship and support.<sup>187</sup> Koopman on the other hand argues that the congregation has various practices.<sup>188</sup> These practices can actually enhance the fulfilment of the church’s role in combating family violence. He further refers us to the work of American theologians for a better understanding of the definition of practices and he suggests that their definitions are very helpful.<sup>189</sup> Koopman citing Dykstra and Bass, says they define practices as follows: “By ‘Christian practices’ we mean things Christian people do together over time to address fundamental human needs in response to and in the light of God’s active presence for the life of the world’”.<sup>190</sup>

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Kwame Bediako, Mechteld Jansen, Jan van Butselaar, Aart Verburg, uitgeverij Boekencentrum, Zoetermeer. 2004:135

<sup>186</sup>The use of *Ubulungisa*, a Xhosa expression in this sense because for me understanding it from a Xhosa background it has a deeper meaning than justice in English. It has an element of ubuntu in it. In *ubulungisa* you do what you would love to be done unto you. In *ubulungisa* there is no measurement or judgment and the way I understand justice there is also which most people use instead of *ubulungisa* there is action or power of law. There must always be a justification of what you do a good or a proper reason for doing something.

<sup>187</sup> See Smit 2004:135, ‘On the impact of the church in South Africa after the collapse of apartheid regime’ in a book called *A new day dawning African Christians living the gospel Essays in honor of Dr.J.J. (Hans) Visser*. In this paper he further says that particularly for members of the African Independent Churches and of many Protestant Churches, including many Pentecostal, Evangelical and Charismatic Churches, such an understanding of ‘church’ comes almost naturally.

<sup>188</sup> See Koopman, ‘Theology and fulfillment of social and economic rights. Some theoretical considerations’ in *Theories of Social and Economic Justice*. (ed.) Sun Press, Stellenbosch. South Africa.’ 2005:10.

<sup>189</sup> Ibid. in *Theories of Social and Economic Justice*. (ed.) Sun Press, Stellenbosch. South Africa. Also see the work that Koopman refers us to C Dykstra and D Bass ‘A theological understanding of Christian practices (2000)’ in M Volf and D Bass *Practicing theology. Beliefs and practices in Christian life* Grand Rapids/ Cambridge: Eerdmans 13-32.

<sup>190</sup> Ibid C.f. C. Dykstra and D. Bass a theological understanding of Christian practices (2000) in *idem*.18.

As this section unfolds it will raise some suggestions on how to integrate the issue of family violence into the church's life and ministry. It will be discussed in two parts e.g. the teaching ministry and congregational and pastoral care. Under the first part which is teaching ministry, awareness of family violence will be dealt with as some form of suggestions on awareness, in catechism and Sunday school classes, developing bible studies materials, workshop and seminars. Secondly, congregational and pastoral care will include the two issues of survivor empowerment and rehabilitation function.

### **5.2.1. INTEGRATING FAMILY VIOLENCE WITH THE CHURCH'S MINISTRY**

It has always been believed that the church is called to continue Jesus' ministry in the world. His ministry was the teaching and healing ministry. If the church is actually following the footsteps of Jesus Christ and is doing God's will, then, it will embody *ubulungisa* – justice. This means incorporating it, including and expressing it in a real or physical form that can be seen, noticed and witnessed by the world. If the church is the institution that marries couples, baptizes children, preaches so that people can repent, but does not say anything when the very same people have problems within their family life, then people will begin to question the church's commitment in promoting family life.

A lack of integration of the issue of family violence into the fabric of the church's life is bound to result in people suffering from family violence and those close to them feeling marginalized and isolated in their struggle for human dignity. Moreover, people in the local community are likely to find it difficult to trust in a church that gets involved at a community level and yet, denies that family violence also exists within its walls.

There are different levels at which the congregation can integrate the issue of family violence in its life and work. In this case, the issue of family violence can be integrated into the ministry of the congregation at least in two levels: the first being teaching ministry (5.2.1.1), secondly, being congregational and pastoral care (5.2.1.2.). This kind of an approach will help to better understand how this challenge could be dealt with in the level of the congregation. What this approach is means, is to start at what you do almost everyday in the church, using the available programmes as the vehicle for integration.

### **5.2.1.1. Teaching Ministry**

Most, if not all congregations, are involved with the teaching ministry in one way or another. Turnbull sees this as an opportunity for pastors to have contact with their members and an opportunity to serve as teachers.<sup>191</sup> Teaching is a learning process. Learning involves change. As a teacher one is responsible to assist in bringing about changes within the lives of the students in one's care. This teaching ministry gives a minister or those involved in teaching ministry in the congregation, an opportunity to bring change in the lives of the people. Learning makes people see things differently. Also, if the perpetrators are taught they will see abuse and the treatment of women differently.

This section will look at a few components of teaching ministry in its attempt to clearly define what could be done when it comes to teaching in the church. The components being: catechism and Sunday school (5.2.1.2.1.), developing bible study material (5.2.1.2.2.) and workshops and seminars (5.2.1.2.3.). Suggestions will be made as to how these components will be utilized in an attempt to integrate family violence into the congregation's ministry.

The reason why there is frequently much misunderstanding of abuse within relationships, is because of a lack in one if not all of the issues raised above. If people can have a clear understanding of the above mentioned issues with some suggestions as to how to apply them, there would be fewer problems. Congregations must seriously take note of these issues and begin to think of how they can develop them and integrate them into their life and ministry.

#### **5.2.1.2.1. CATECHISM AND SUNDAY SCHOOL CLASSES**

The first lesson that people receive after joining the local church is from the catechism class. One wonders why these classes most of the time the emphasis is the teaching about the doctrine of the church. What about the socio-ethical and moral issues that are challenging the church and society especially the silence on abuse and family violence? What about the church emphasizing in its teaching how to practice within the relationship or marriage reconciliation, forgiveness, love, understanding, tolerance, patience, *ubulungisa*, (caring) *ukukhathala*, etc.

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<sup>191</sup> See Turnbull R.G. *Baker's Dictionary of Practical Theology*, Baker Book House Michigan. 1967: 324

These are the most important tools that are being used in the church to prepare young people for full membership and are one of the very specific obligations of the pastor as a teacher.<sup>192</sup> In other denominations these classes are called confirmation classes. It is in these classes where new converts are nurtured. The churches and congregations should be encouraged to develop a curriculum that is relevant to the social challenges that are facing the communities and the country at large. The church is one of the institutions that deal with the moral formation of the people. Therefore, it is important that as the church accepts new converts into the life and work of the church those new converts must be taught moral and social behaviours, churches must stop running away from real issues and spiritualize everything while people are suffering inside and outside the church. This does not mean that spirituality is not important, but both must be seen as equally important.

Since chapter three dealt with the causes and complicating factors of family violence and socialization was identified as one of the major causes, it will be suggested that it must be one of the concepts that can be dealt with in order to change young people's mindset. For instance, one can give an example of a lesson that can be conducted. This will be in a form of a lesson plan. Please see Appendix 4

#### **5.2.1.1.2. DEVELOPING BIBLE STUDY MATERIALS**

Bible study is one of the most important aspects of teaching. It is important that in our congregations we teach about the issues relating to human rights and dignity, acting justly, love and loving, responsibility and acting responsibly, forgiveness and reconciliation. This kind of ministry is long overdue in our churches and congregations because the Church is the only institution and organization that gathers hundreds of people every week. The Church needs to make use of that opportunity. This is not to say that some Churches are not conducting bible studies. The point is that they must be emphasized. As an example of the kind of bible study material that can be used, the World Council of Churches drafted one with the themes as 'ending violence'.

The World Council of Churches has declared this decade 2001-2010 a decade to overcome violence. This refers to all forms of violence – family violence, physical violence and any other

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<sup>192</sup> Ibid, 311, Turnbull for more information refer to books such as Storvick, Hortence, *We learn to teach*. Minneapolis: Augsburg Publishing House, 1957, Streng, William D., *The Faith we Teach*, Minneapolis: Augsburg Publishing House, 1962.

form of violence. The council has set a challenge for the churches in terms of raising awareness, by developing a study guide that can be used and developed by churches. This study guide is a guide to help or assist individuals and groups in churches to reflect and act in the decade to overcome violence. This decade of overcoming violence was given a theme and it is called: “Churches seeking reconciliation and peace.”<sup>193</sup>

These bible study sessions should be open to all the members of the congregation and not be limited to the victims and perpetrators. They must be seen as empowerment for others as well. What is suggested here is that the bible studies require careful preparation. There should be a welcoming and relaxed atmosphere. Sitting in a circle helps interaction. In conducting the bible studies it is important that one starts with your own context and then broaden the conversation. In the process the minister must allow time for people to speak from their experiences but be aware that this may be painful for some. The minister must also remember that listening is as important as speaking and that violent words can be just as destructive as physical violence.

Lastly, it is important that as families and members of the church, prayer time is made together.

#### **5. 2.1.1.3. WORKSHOPS AND SEMINARS**

Education is one of the most powerful tools that can be used to assist members of the church to understand the extent of family violence and how it can be reduced. Workshops and seminars are not usually held in most churches, yet there are people available with the skills for conducting workshops. What the churches can do, is to initiate and support training for members of the congregation and the leadership of the local congregation. These workshops and seminars can be structured in such a way that they respond to the local problems of that particular area and are specifically for laypeople. Again, the workshops must be understood to be part of empowerment and raising awareness. Workshops for family violence can take different forms, e.g. workshops that are focused on men only and their responsibilities, workshops focused on women and empowerment. These workshops should not be restricted to members of the church only; they must be opened to the public as well. By doing this, the church will be making a contribution to the community as well.

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<sup>193</sup> See the World Council of Churches study guide titled? *‘Why violence? Why not Peace?’*, 2002.

### **5.2.1.2. CONGREGATIONAL AND PASTORAL CARE**

Pastoral care is one of the daily activities in most congregations. This section will firstly, explain what is meant by pastoral care. Secondly, in the context of family violence, also explain who needs this pastoral care and by who is it offered. Basically the section will deal with the survivor empowerment (5.2.1.2.1) as well as the rehabilitation function (5.2.1.1.2.)

Pastoral care, as Campbell observes, has its primary aim, teaching or building up of the body of Christ, until we attain the unity of the faith and knowledge of the Son of God to mature manhood, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ.<sup>194</sup> Furthermore, he draws the reader's attention to two important aspects of pastoral care i.e. pastoral care involves a ministry of reconciliation to both God and neighbour, and secondly, he mentions healing as prominent in the ministry of Jesus to individuals. Therefore, if the congregations are to be involved in pastoral care in the context of family violence, it means they must be involved in reconciling the families and also healing the relationships. According to Campbell, pastoral care is naturally associated with guidance in recognizing and making moral decisions.<sup>195</sup> Families affected by violence should be given guidance and assistance towards making moral decisions, because most of the time when people are in a crisis, they cannot make good decisions about their future.

In the light of this explanation it is important that the congregation participates in pastoral care which must not be seen as the pastor's duty only. Here two things will be suggested as a contribution from the congregation in assisting victims of family violence i.e. survivor empowerment and secondly, the rehabilitation function of the congregation. These will be discussed briefly.

#### **5.2.1.2.1. SURVIVOR EMPOWERMENT**

As the result of all that has happened to the victims, they lose their identity as to who they are and what they are known to be. Now they need to regain their human dignity. They must be helped to move away from being victims to become survivors of family violence so that they can help others as well. As was mentioned in the section where the complicating factors of family violence were discussed, it became clear that some women lose their self-esteem. This becomes a challenge to the church to help or assist its members to restore their self-esteem, their being. This is where the issue

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<sup>194</sup> See Campbell A.V. 'A Dictionary of Pastoral Care' SPCK London 1990:183.

<sup>195</sup> Ibid. 184

of healing comes in, healing the victims emotionally. At this stage one would like to suggest a few guidelines that can assist the ministers, pastors or any other persons assigned to perform this task in the church or congregation, when they converse with the victim.

Having mentioned the issue of self-esteem, it is important to say that self-esteem is perhaps the characteristic most needed by both the victim and the perpetrator of family violence. Studies have shown that family members (spouses and children, if involved) are lacking in self-respect and self-confidence.<sup>196</sup> Aggression is both perpetrated and accepted because the participants believe they do not have either the personal power or ability to stop doing it or accepting it. Continued psychological abuse can even create low self-esteem in a person previously self-confident, setting that person up for physical abuse later in a relationship.

As the church we need to take seriously what women reveal about their experiences. We need to listen carefully to their stories. They must not be judged but rather what one needs to do is to respond to their feelings. Show concern about their injuries. Check whether they have received medical attention. Be concerned about their safety or need for a safe place. Be sure that a safe place is available to them, whether in a home or family violence shelter; let her know how to contact such a place in your community.

Support the legitimacy of them getting away from the situation where they are in danger, but do not push them to leave or criticize them for not having left sooner. The danger level intensifies when a woman leaves the relationship. It must be taken into consideration that she may be very ambivalent. She probably loves her husband and it is quite possible that when he is not abusive, he can be very loving towards her. Recognize that she may feel she has failed as a wife, but she does not cause the abuse. Nobody deserves to be hit. Just because the couple has conflict (normal), does not mean that there is justification for verbal or physical abuse (not normal). We need to realize that if she stays in the relationship and her husband does not get help, the abuse will happen again and will get worse. Explain the cycle of violence within the discussions. Family violence increases in frequency and severity over time.

We must recognize that an abusive husband may have greatly damaged his wife's self-esteem and confidence in her ability to take care of herself and her children. Do not reinforce her low self-esteem by taking over and making decisions for her. It must be noted that choices about her life are

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<sup>196</sup> See [www.elca.org/jle/alc.families](http://www.elca.org/jle/alc.families) violence.html.



hers, not yours. Let her make her own decisions. It is important to make a suggestion to her that her husband needs treatment, needs some help to get out of the situation. He needs to take responsibility for, and change his behaviour. Has she thought about pressing charges? Battering is a crime and a prison record may be helpful in the long run to hold him accountable for his behaviour. Women must be encouraged to use or utilize any local resources available to victims so that they can get as much information as possible about their options.

#### **5.2.1.2.2. REHABILITATION FUNCTION**

The second aspect of pastoral care that will be discussed in this section is rehabilitation. According to Campbell it implies the restoration of a person to full physical, mental and social capability.<sup>197</sup> Rehabilitation means that the person who needs to be rehabilitated is unable to function properly. This can apply to both victims and perpetrators.

In this section a few things will be suggested that can be considered by those who are involved in this kind of ministry. The church, pastor or whoever is dealing with the cases of abusive men in the church must make very clear that the violence must stop. Those who offer counselling in the congregations must make themselves available for the perpetrators especially, when they need help to transform. The first thing that must be brought to perpetrators' attention is the fact that violence must come to an end.

This can be used as a guide for ministers and pastors dealing with abusive men:

- It must be communicated very clearly to the perpetrators that the violent behaviour is unacceptable. This should be the first priority.
- Do not accept his rationalizations or his blaming the victim. Even if he is under pressure at work, the house is not clean, or the dishes are dirty. Violence is not acceptable. There is no excuse for domestic violence.
- Offer him hope that he can change. Tell him about group treatment or other counselling options available in your community.
- Hold him accountable. Promises to change are part of the cycle of violence. Unless they are accompanied by concrete actions, like going to treatment groups, the promises are

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<sup>197</sup> See Campbell 'A Dictionary of Pastoral Care' SPCK London 1990:235.

meaningless. In order to change he must accept responsibility for his actions. Then, if he is serious about changing, he will seek out the help he needs.

- Do not take his word that the violence has stopped. Rather, check with his abused partner (without his being present or aware of the visit with her). Often it is necessary for the couple to separate until there is no more danger of abuse.
- Do not encourage marital counselling until it is clear that the violence has stopped completely. In relationships of uneven power, couples' counselling is not appropriate. To work with them together, before the violence has stopped, only serves to endanger the victim.

### **5. 3. WORSHIP – *Bring it to God***

The previous section looked at how the church, as the congregation, can respond to the challenge of family violence. A number of issues were raised that can be of help in the daily activities of the church. In this section the focus will be on the church as worship. It will be wrestling with the question: what can the worshipping communities do during worship time?

In order to speak intelligently about Christian worship one must first decide what this term means. It is not an easy term or expression to define. According to Smit, Christian worship can be demonstrated through regular worship intended to have an impact on those who attend; an impact that includes faith formation and moral formation.<sup>198</sup> The church can take this as an opportunity to respond to the challenge of family violence by giving people information about family violence. This can also be an opportunity to deal with victims and perpetrators in terms of faith formation and moral formation. Smit further argues that there exists a complex reciprocal relationship between liturgy and life, between worship and ethics. For him, the ways in which this happens may differ from one form of worship to another, but there are clear commonalities, not only between baptism and ethics and between the Lord's Supper and ethics, but also between regular liturgical forms and ethics.<sup>199</sup> This idea of liturgy will be discussed at length and an

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<sup>198</sup> See Smit 'The impact of the church in South Africa after the collapse of apartheid regime' in *A new day dawning African Christians living the gospel Essays in honour of Dr. J.J.(Hans) Visser*, (2004:135)

<sup>199</sup> Ibid For more information on this matter read the following sources, Geoffrey Wainwright, including *Doxology*. 'The praise of God in worship, doctrine and life', New York: Oxford University Press, 1980; *The Ecumenical moment*, Grand Rapids, MI: Wm B Eerdmans, 1983, *Worship with one accord*, New York: Oxford University Press, 1997; and for a discussion of his influence on South African circles he refers us to his personal work, D.J. Smit, *Spirituality, Worship, Confession, and Church unity.* In *Ecumenical theology in worship, doctrine, and life*, D.S Cunningham et al, eds., New York: Oxford University Press, 1999.

example of liturgy that can be used in services for family violence will be provided. White wrestles with the working definition of Christian worship, he proposes three methods to help clarify what Christian worship means.<sup>200</sup>

The purpose of this exercise for him is not to make a comparative study of the Christian thinkers speaking about Christian worship, but to stimulate reflection. The intention here is not to discuss these schools of thought but to give a clear background of White's own definition of Christian worship and where he comes from with his definition.<sup>201</sup> Having done his investigation, White concludes that to speak of what happens in Christian worship is taken from the world. We come together, deliberately seeking to approach reality at its deepest level by encountering God in and through Jesus Christ and by responding to this awareness. Therefore, when we bring our cries, frustrations and anger at family violence and confessions, asking for the forgiveness of our sins incorporating all this in our worship, we are indeed dealing with the reality of life at its deepest level of seeking an encounter with God.

Secondly, for White 'Christian worship' is speaking and touching in God's name. This suggests a more personal and physical way to understand worship than an abstract intellectual definition provides.<sup>202</sup> The meaning of this definition is that in worship we speak to God for people and to people for God. At the same time, our worship involves touching people in name, especially in the sacrament. Koopman believes that worship services have the potential to transform people.<sup>203</sup> He further argues that from different perspectives, different authors demonstrate how worship

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<sup>200</sup> See White James, F, *Introduction to Christian worship* 1983:16. He makes a thorough inquiry of what Christian worship is, He uses three methods in his inquiry to help try clarifies what we mean by "Christian worship". He argues that he shall examine how several Protestant and Catholic thinkers define the term through their use of it. Secondly, he proposes to explore some key words that Christians have chosen in various languages at different times as most adequate to say what they meant by Christian worship. Thirdly, he quickly surveys the enduring forms of Christian worship itself in order to discern constancy within diversity. He hopes that the three exercises will help others clarify for themselves what they mean when speaking of Christian worship.

<sup>201</sup> He argues that he shall look at three Protestant thinkers and three from Catholic backgrounds, and then explore two additional possibilities. His first reference is that of Professor Paul. W. Hoon that he made a major contribution to liturgical studies in his important book, *The Integrity of Worship* He is writing from the Methodist tradition, and Hoon is concerned for the theological discrimination as well as sensitivity to cultures. He maintains that Christian worship is God's revelation of himself in Jesus Christ and man's response or a two-fold action that of God towards the human soul in Jesus Christ and in man's responsive action through Jesus Christ. The key words in Hoon's understanding of Christian worship is seem to be 'revelation and response'.

<sup>202</sup> Ibid. 22.

<sup>203</sup> See Nico Koopman, 'Theology and the fulfillment of social and economic rights. Some theoretical considerations.' 2005:9.

impacts on our ethical choices, policies and moral living in various walks of life.<sup>204</sup> This means that if our worship services are vibrant, they will definitely be able to change perpetrators and empower the victims and also have an impact on our lives. On the other hand, according to Smit, in worship we are busy looking towards the right direction.<sup>205</sup> He raises two important things that take place in worship, as we learn to see and we learn to care.

In the context of family violence, Christian worship will help us to see the impact of family violence not only in our families but also in our communities. Smit emphasizes the fact that Christian worship teaches us to look in the right direction and he borrows this phrase from Hauerwas (1989: 95).<sup>206</sup> For Smit, ethics is first a way of seeing before it is a matter of doing. The ethical task is not to tell you what is right or wrong but rather to train you to see and according to him, that explains why in church, a great deal of time and energy is spent in the act of worship.<sup>207</sup> In the midst of family violence as we spend much time and energy in the act of worship to what extent do we focus on the challenge of family violence in the church in order to train people to see it as a problem? We attempt to offer some suggestions as the response to the question, because Christian worship involves liturgy, sermon, prayers and music – we shall look at what can be done using these elements of worship.

### 5.3.1. ON LITURGY

When we talk about liturgy there are two things that Zimmerman refers to, i.e. concern for others, remembering and concern for others – *Diakonia*<sup>208</sup>. As she delves into the concept of remembering, she makes an illustration of the success of the family gathering as a time of telling stories about ancestors and events that shaped family tradition. It is not surprising to discover that similar kinds of activities take place for similar reasons when a religious family gathers for worship. In fact, for her all liturgies are an act of remembering and celebrating God's mighty deeds on our behalf.<sup>209</sup> Therefore, liturgical remembering is a way for God to be known and a way for divine events to cast our religious ideals and values. In our liturgy we remember the

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<sup>204</sup> Ibid.

<sup>205</sup> See Smit 'Liturgy and Life? On the importance of worship for Christian ethics' in *Scriptura International Journal of Bible, Religion and Theology in Southern Africa, Christian Ethics in South Africa Issue No. 62*. 1997:261.

<sup>206</sup> Ibid. 1997:262.

<sup>207</sup> See Smit 1997:262.

<sup>208</sup> The author develops these two concepts further in her book called *Liturgy as Living Faith*.

<sup>209</sup> See Zimmerman 1993:5, *Liturgy as Living Faith - A Liturgical Spirituality* University of Scranton Press, London and Toronto. 1993:5.

downtrodden, the afflicted, the victims of family violence and the children who have become orphans as a result of family violence. Having listened and heard the stories it is our responsibility to respond to them in different ways as God did with the Israelites.

Emphasizing this will help the argument to be clearly understood as to why we need to remember the events that took place in our lives so that we can connect them into our act of worship by means of liturgy. The liturgical activity of remembering serves as a theological/liturgical infrastructure for interpreting Deuteronomy's central message of the meaning of covenant and law – that is, how Israel related to God and each other in 7<sup>th</sup> B.C Israel<sup>210</sup>. One would assume that we also need to understand that in our liturgy, remembering should be the central message of our services. Our liturgy should be a response to circumstances that are recreated in the lives of the people. If God does it for us then surely we must do it for the others amongst us.

Secondly, Zimmerman focuses on *diakonia*. The Greek word *diakonia* may be linguistically misleading. It is usually translated as 'service'. *Diakonia* could easily be compared with similar activities listed under service for various companies or public sector organizations. The system works something like this: we have a problem and we call a company or organization; they send someone who "fixes" the problem or we make an appointment to see one of their personnel. We pay the company or organization. In this case there is one-to-one correspondence between two parties in the form of a service rendered and some appropriate compensation received.

The use of the term 'service' in a Christian/liturgical context is different. The recent tendency has been to use the term 'ministry'. The use of them ministry is to avoid linguistic misunderstanding. For Zimmerman "the key difference lies in compensatory expectations". Companies make profits from service; Christians give it without expecting a return. Service organizations solve problems, Christians are open to mystery. The public service sector accomplishes goals necessary for the good order of society; Christians strive for a fuller realization of their self-identity as the Body of Christ."<sup>211</sup>

According to Smit, Christian liturgy has to do with Christian life.<sup>212</sup> This means that Christian worship has ethical implications for public life. It helps those who are worshippers with an ability

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<sup>210</sup> Ibid. 6.

<sup>211</sup> Ibid. 18.

<sup>212</sup> See Smit, 'Liturgy and Life? On the importance of worship for Christian ethics' in *Scriptura International Journal of Bible, Religion and Theology in Southern Africa, Christian Ethics in South Africa* Issue No. 62 1997:267.

to learn to see the world differently. Smit points out clearly that there are many different ways of seeing the relationship between Christian liturgy and public life. He refers us to scholars that have made a contribution to this discussion, often in radically different and even conflicting ways<sup>213</sup>

This once again reminds us, the church, of our calling that we should not expect any rewards for our ministry to others. The two concepts that we have briefly discussed will help us look for a way to conceptualize why the relationship between liturgy and life must be so. They will help us to understand and gain access to the relationship between being and action. This will clearly be demonstrated as we investigate the question as to how the church can shape our liturgy during worship.

Smit says that in many South African churches, particularly during the apartheid years, it was customary to develop liturgies with a view to specific ethical issues and challenges, with suggestions for prayers and litanies, scripture readings and sermons, etc.<sup>214</sup> This could be helpful also to churches, congregations and individual believers involved in regular liturgical activities in developing liturgy with reference to family violence. For this section a liturgy has been developed as an example of an order of service that can be used in special services as a response to family violence.

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<sup>213</sup> Ibid. For more information regarding this matter see the following, Bonhoeffer D 1959; *'Creation and Fall'* London SCM Press, linking prayer and doing what is right, Paul Lehmann 1985, Smit argues that he deliberately attempts to work out with regards to worship and liturgy.

<sup>214</sup> See Smit 1997: 272.

## **A sample of a liturgy**

### ***Overcoming Violence: Seeking Reconciliation and Peace***

***[From lament to Response: A Worship Service for the Decade to Overcome Violence]***<sup>215</sup>

To repent any complicity in violence; to explore our faith traditions for ways to overcome the spirit, logic and practice of violence.

#### ***Come all who search for opportunities***

To work with local communities, secular movements and people of other faith for a world of peace.

#### ***Come all who believe that now is the time***

To analyze and expose The structure of service moves from lament and confession of violence to hearing the good news of the gospel (that is, the possibility of overcoming and transforming violence), to response, including identifying local forms of violence and strategies to overcome violence throughout the decade.

**Please note:** The leader's parts for all participants are *in italics*

### **Call to Worship**

#### ***Come all who are challenged by the opportunity***

To discover afresh what it means to share a common humanity; to confirm a commitment to the unity of all God's people and to the ministry of reconciliation.

#### ***Come all who hear the call***

different forms of violence and their interconnection, and to act in solidarity with those who struggle for justice and the integrity of creation.

#### ***Come all who are eager to be a part of the body of Christ that wish to overcome family violence***

And to let it shape the agenda and work of the churches, communities, organizations and concerned individuals.

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<sup>215</sup> The Rev. Sue Jackson, minister of the Emmanuel Bethany pastoral charge in southern Ontario, developed part of the order of service and it appears in the fall 2003 issue of the Women's concern. Sue is the member of the national Gender Justice Committee. I have also modified it to fit the context of the service for the family violence victims and raising awareness to the congregation. See <http://www.united-church.ca/violence/worship/lament.shtml>

“Let justice roll down like waters and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream.”(Amos 5:24)

*Let us worship our God revealed in Jesus Christ.*

**“For Christ is our peace, who has made us both one, and has broken down the dividing wall of hostility...”** (Ephesians 2:14) We live in a violent world;

***Lament and confession allow us:***

To name some of the parts of violence without assuming all is known and understood. Situations involving violence and their contexts are diverse and complex.

***Lament and confession allow us:***

To state our complicity in the harm that has been done and to recognize the structural nature of much violence

***This is the verdict***

***“Light has come into the world, people loved darkness instead of light”***

***“Because their deeds were evil.” Everyone who does evil hates the light, and will not come into the light for fear that his deeds will be exposed. “But whoever lives by the truth comes into the light, so that it may be seen plainly that what he has been done through God.” (John 3:19-12)***

***God of compassion,***

[WOMEN] we lament the violence of war between nations and within them where greed and vested interest are often hidden under a spuriously honourable motive, where long-standing anger boils over into bloodshed and betrayal, and the rattle of gunfire writes its story in blood. Where grief and rage condense as hot tears and flames mark the places where homes and fields once stood.

***God who sees the sparrow fall,***

[MEN] it is hard for most of us to even imagine the daily experience of people caught in such horrors! Forgive us when we close our ears, our hands and our hearts or numb ourselves with fictional, two-dimensional violence in movies and video games. Give us the courage to see the pain of those who suffer, so that we might stand with in their efforts to overcome family violence and make peace in their homes.



*Oh God, who numbers the hairs of our head,*

[ALL] we lament the violence that happens when we count money instead of meaning. When we measure almost all that we do by market costs and values and create economic systems that exclude countless people. When we blame those who suffer, rather than recognize blessings that have advantaged us.

*O God who sent Jesus so that we might have life abundant*

[WOMEN ] forgive us for our narrow vision of the well being of your Community of Creation. Bless us with your Spirit of life so that we may treasure all parts of your universe, and have the will and the wisdom to live connected rather than in conflict with each other.

*God; Father and Mother of us all*

[MEN] we lament the violence that erupts and often perpetuates itself in families – the battering and abuse by those who themselves were violated, the pain and shame of children, women and men. We grieve the undercurrents of cutting remarks, indifference and neglect, scapegoating and belittling that take their daily toll on the human psyche and diminish joy and life itself.

*God, whom Jesus called Abba*

[ALL] help us to rest so securely in your love that the need to dominate others, to strike back, to protect our vulnerability will become part of our past and lose its power to shape our present and our future.

### **5.3.2. PRAYER**

*Creator God,*

We lament the violence of our language. You have given us the power to place people in categories in order to sever them from our respect and care. The “isms” and phobias of race, sex, age, gender, nationality, sexual orientation, religion and politics betray our intention to set boundaries as to which neighbours are acceptable.

Help us to remember that we are all one in Christ Jesus. Expand our understanding of your Kingdom to include all the beauty and colourful diversity of your creation. Enable us to see that we are enriched rather than threatened by differences.

### 5.3.3. SCRIPTURE READING

*“Let justice roll down like waters and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream”.*

*(Amos 5:24)*

This scripture reading from Amos is taken because the purpose of this exercise is to embody *ubulungisa* – justice. The main emphasis on this passage is *ubulungisa*. Therefore, it is important that in our sermons on occasions like this, we must emphasize *ubulungisa* and instil it within the congregants.

*At this stage a sermon may be preached followed by a confession of sins*

### 5.3.4. SERMONS

In Sunday services there is always a sermon that is preached to the congregation. The sermon is regarded as the message of the day in the church. In other words, it is asking the question, what is God saying to us? What must we do about our lives? This section will investigate what can sermons offer to the people who are victims of family violence and perpetrators of family violence within the church. Different sermons can be preached in different services and different occasions. Martin raises six main areas that the sermon embraces, e.g. teaching, training of new converts (which he refers to as catechism), comfort, (he uses a Greek word *paraenesis*, meaning ‘it speaks to’) moral reconstruction, witness and lastly, witness as confession (*homologia* in Greek)<sup>216</sup>. The focus will be on two aspects of the sermon: the sermon as the message of *ithemba* (hope) (5.3.2.1) and the sermon reflecting a theology of *ukukhululeka* – liberation theology – (5.3.2.2).

#### 5.3.4.1. A MESSAGE OF ITHEMBA (HOPE)

The message of *ithemba* should be the most powerful message that must be brought to the victims of family violence. Hope is a gift from God and it has an element of faith and trust that some change will happen in our lives. Lewis writes in his contribution and discussion of the theology of hope and the God of hope, “The Old Testament. portrays Israel as a people of hope, brought from bondage into a land of promise, which trusts that God will deliver them again from situations of

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<sup>216</sup> See Martin Ralph. P, ‘The worship of God some theological Pastoral, and Practical Reflections’. 1982:109-112

hopelessness, and send his liberating Messiah in the last days. He further says that, likewise the Christian church prays, 'Thy Kingdom come' and celebrates Christ's death until he comes, expressing the hope that at the end of history, evil selfishness will be judged and destroyed, and the world made new as a community of justice, peace and love."<sup>217</sup>

What this says to us as the church and to victims, is that hope evokes patience in the present suffering, but also inspires resistance to present evils. This is the type of message that must be preached and reflected in sermons so that people should not give up and should not look beyond their situations. Hope sometimes can resemble wishful thinking. Lewis argues that religious hope, especially, has been criticized as an illusion. Yet, because hoping against hope (Romans 4:18) begins by recognizing the inadequacies of the present, it may be judged a realistic assessment of the *status quo* which responds to acknowledged limitations neither with panic nor resignation, but with courage and resolution.<sup>218</sup>

All participants in family violence may interpret their predicament in a theological way although that interpretation may be incorrect. Some women believe that they deserve to be beaten because of a sin in their past for which they think "God is punishing me", or that they are bad wives and deserve retribution. Again, to some there is a growing confusion that family order requires the man to be dominant and sometimes violent. Some men believe they have a God-given role that includes the physical "discipline" of wives. Some parents believe their God-given role includes physical "discipline" of children. It must be noted and understood that legal authorities, secular counsellors, as family friends cannot seem to satisfy the longing these people have to discuss their predicaments theologically.

In addition to legal and medical help, victims and perpetrators need a religious counsellor who can help interpret scriptures and tradition, who can assure the person of forgiveness and who can explain that the victim need not feel guilty because of someone else's action. Many victims need to be helped to see themselves as respectable people loved by God, so that they can begin to see the attacker as the one who is at fault and responsible for his or her own behaviour. No one deserves to be assaulted, nor does anyone have the right to abuse another.

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<sup>217</sup> See Lewis AE, *A Dictionary of Pastoral Care* (ed.) A. V. Campbell, SPCK, London 1990: 116. He further refers to some works on the theology of hope such as, Barth. K, 'The Holy Spirit and Christian Hope' *Church Dogmatics*, 1V, 3 (T&T. Clark, Edinburgh, 1962, pp.902-942). Macquarrie, J., 'Hope', In *Search of Humanity* (SCM, 1982), pp. 243-252. Moltmann, J., *Theology of Hope* (SCM, 1967), *Hope and Planning* (SCM, 1971). Pannenberg, W, *Jesus God and Man* (SCM, 1968).

<sup>218</sup> See Lewis AE, *A Dictionary of Pastoral Care* (ed.) A. V. Campbell, SPCK, London 1990: 116

Rakoczy makes a strong point that the risen Christ is significant in Womanist Christology as a symbol of hope; for the resurrection shows us that there is more to life than suffering and the cross.<sup>219</sup> For women, this signifies that their oppression is the context of the struggle for freedom, but that it is not the last word about the meaning of life. A vital question arises at times like these: ‘What can women hope for in a situation of family violence and abuse’? Rakoczy provides us with an answer to this question, with his statement that those women hope for transformation, justice and liberation.<sup>220</sup>

#### **5.3.4.2. REFLECTING A THEOLOGY OF UKUKHULULEKA (Liberation theology)**

In tracing the history of liberation theology, José Míguez Bonino’s article as a contribution in the *Dictionary of Ethics, Theology and Society* become helpful in understanding the history and the roots of liberation theology. He argues that since the 1960’s, the term liberation theology has been used more strictly for the attempts to develop an understanding of the Christian faith from the point of view and the experience of social groups engaged in different forms of struggles against economic, political, social or gender oppression.<sup>221</sup> Gustavo Gutiérrez<sup>222</sup> first used the term ‘liberation theology’ in Latin America in his papers in 1969 and 1970. James Cone also used it in the USA in 1973. It was again used in South Africa, by South African theologians in the struggle against apartheid. Lastly, the feminist theology emerging also in the 1970’s and 1980’s should also be included in the category of a theology of liberation.

It is from this background that the term liberation theology is used. This study deals with the struggle against family violence which is the result of gender oppression. The challenge for the church is how women can be liberated from this kind of oppression. It is suggested here that the sermons that are being preached in churches should be the message of liberation.

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<sup>220</sup> See Susan Rakoczy, *In Her name Women Doing Theology*, Cluster Publications, and Pietermaritzburg, South Africa. 2004:115.

<sup>221</sup> See José Míguez, *Dictionary of Ethics, Theology and Society*, (eds.) Paul Barry Clark and Andrew Linzey, London. 1996:521

<sup>222</sup> See Gutiérrez G, *A Theology of Liberation History, Politics and Salvation*, SCM Press LTD 1970. Other works that can be considered on liberation theology: Boff. L (1987) *Introducing Liberation Theology*, Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, Segundo J.L. (1976) *The Liberation of Theology*, Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books.

A popular South African church leader and theologian Allan Boesak, argues that liberation theology, by beginning with the Exodus and by making theology a critical reflection on the praxis of liberation, places the gospel in its authentic perspective, namely that of liberation.<sup>223</sup> This clearly means that liberation theology conveys the message of the gospel according to its original intentions, which is to liberate the oppressed. Boesak further makes the claim that the God of the Bible is the God of liberation, a God of justice rather than of injustice, a God of freedom and humanity rather than enslavement and subservience; a God of love, righteousness and brotherhood rather than of hatred, self-interest and exploitation.<sup>224</sup>

This statement challenges the very sermons that are being preached. People want to hear what the gospel is saying about their situation. What is the word of God saying about family violence? What message is the preacher sending to women who are abused and also to those who are perpetrators? Therefore, liberation theology is saying that preachers of the word of God must present to people a God who is against injustice, because he is the God of justice; and present him as God of love and righteousness. This focus alone should inspire the church to action on behalf of the millions of victims who are being sexually abused, physically assaulted, psychologically demeaned and spiritually damaged. The church especially proclaims “good news to the poor”[Luke 4:18]

This good news should surely include deeds of mercy and love and liberation from assault. It relates directly to family violence. For example, one reason that abuse victims say they remain in a violent home is a lack of economic independence. Spouses without paid work, usually women, do not have the resource to pay for transportation, housing, or legal aid to get away from the violent wage earner. In addition, a victim may not have job skills to earn enough to support the children as a single parent.<sup>225</sup>

#### **5.3.4.3. MUSIC**

Music is one of the activities that take place during the church service. It is always expected and assumed that the music or songs that are sung in every service should be relevant to the occasion. Music engages us to the service. It makes us part of worship. Steve De Gruchy argues that it is

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<sup>223</sup> See Boesak. A., ‘Farewell to Innocents’ 1976:15

<sup>224</sup> See Boesak 1976:15

<sup>225</sup> Ibid.

clear that the way we conduct our church-life within society will in turn influence our preaching, prayer and singing.<sup>226</sup> Furthermore, he strengthens his argument by citing John De Gruchy when he writes:

When a liturgy has no theological substance, coherence and direction, it not only inhibits theological insights and understanding, but reinforces misconceptions about Christian faith and discipleship. It can also reinforce social attitudes that are contrary to the gospel. A theologically bad liturgy projects a false image of God, of ourselves and of the gospel, and thereby prevents the birth and growth of true theological insight and ecclesial praxis.<sup>227</sup>

This means that our songs must also have theological substance and must have relevance and speak to our situations. In the context of a service on family violence, it is important to select hymns that speak to the situation of the victims. In new situations there should be new songs. If there are no hymns that speak to the situation of family violence, people should be encouraged to write new songs that will connect to every situation. These hymns can be derived from existing hymns by changing certain verses or writing songs to well-known tunes. Again, the writing of completely new songs can produce songs that reflect the culture of the people of South Africa with their experiences. A good example of a songwriter is that of the first ever indigenous hymn writer in South Africa, Ntsikana, the Xhosa prophet.<sup>228</sup> His hymns spoke to the situation of Africans. Therefore, young people should learn from this example by writing hymns. Today we are also confronted with the challenge of HIV/AIDS and one does not know how many songs if any, are used in the church services dealing with HIV/AIDS.

This is a great challenge for the church that needs a serious consideration. Songs and hymns no doubt, bring healing, encouragement, hope, joy and happiness. Steve De Gruchy writes: “We are not different from biblical songwriters when we sing joy about victory with Miriam (Exodus15), or we mourn about oppression with the exiled psalmist (Psalm137)”<sup>229</sup>

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<sup>226</sup> See Steve De Gruchy ‘Singing the Kairos’ in *We shall overcome, Spirituality for Liberation*, (eds.) Michael Worship and Desmond van der Water, Cluster Publications, Pietermaritzburg. 1991:11.

<sup>227</sup> Ibid.

<sup>228</sup> Ntsikana was Xhosa prophet; He wrote his first hymn in 1822. He was not only a prophet and hymn writer but also a poet because his language was poetical.

<sup>229</sup> See Steve De Gruchy ‘Singing the Kairos’ in the book *We Shall Overcome Spirituality for Liberation* (eds.) Michael Worsnip and Desmond van der Water, Cluster Publications Pietermaritzburg. 1991:26.

#### 5. 4. CHRISTIAN BELIEVERS – *Living Ukukhathala*

The previous sections of this chapter have looked at the church as ‘congregation’ and the church as ‘worshipping’ community. This section investigates deeper the role of the church as Christian believers in overcoming domestic violence. This section will try to interrogate the question how individual believers can display *ukukhathala* unto the others. Here it is referred to the victims of family violence as well as the perpetrators. The following themes will be addressed: a theology of *ukukhathala* (5.4.1.), stigma and discrimination (5.4.2.), speak-it-out (5.4.3.) and role players (5.4.4.). These will help to see Christian faith as being concerned also about others, showing care about what is happening in our circles, meaning living *ukukhathala*. Before taking the discussion further, it is important to understand, first, what is meant by Christian believers?

According to Smit, Christian believers can be defined as the salt of the earth and the light of the world, involved in their own daily ways of following Jesus Christ and confessing the faith through their lives and actions.<sup>230</sup> Smit further stretches his argument by raising some ethical questions concerning the role of the Christian believers and their impact in society. The questions that he raises are: ‘What are the roles of Christian people in public life, in politics and in the economy? How do Christians contribute to public opinion and democratic life? What is their impact on the strengthening of the moral fabric of society? How can they themselves, with or without others, contribute to the initiatives, the structures and the organizations of civil society, today? Once again, it is obvious that this could indeed be the thrust behind the original question and that it would surely call for fascinating analyses and accounts of life in contemporary South Africa.’<sup>231</sup> The questions that Smit is raising here become helpful as we reflect on the role that the individual Christian can play in combating family violence. What do they see as their role in public life? How can they make a contribution to the moral fabric of society? Do they see themselves as having a role in the moral formation and faith formation of other fellow brothers and sisters?

Koopman takes this argument a little further by saying that the individual Christians in their normal daily roles and in voluntary organizations are equipped by the institutional church to

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<sup>230</sup> See Smit D.J 2004:143 ‘The Impact of the Church in South Africa after the collapse of the Apartheid Regime’, in *A New day dawning African Christians living the gospel, Essays in honour of dr. JJ. (Hans)*.

<sup>231</sup> Ibid.

participate in appropriate ways in various sectors of society in the fulfilment of social and economic rights and the achievement of social and economic justice.<sup>232</sup> When discussing the causes and consequences of family violence in one of the chapters, social and economic causes were identified as some of the major causes of family violence. Therefore Koopman's argument becomes valid here because if the individual Christians are equipped by the institutional church to deal with issues of social and economic justice, it means that they can in turn assist families with issues of social and economic justice within the context of the family. Koopman also argues that individual Christians are equipped with regard to moral decision-making.<sup>233</sup> This can mean that they are not limited to making decisions around related economic issues only but also social issues.

This section, as it attempts to achieve some concrete suggestions as to what individual Christians can do as their contribution towards combating family violence, will focus on the following aspects: developing a theology of *ukukhathala*, look at how the stigma and the discrimination of women who are victims of family violence can be stopped and how victims can be encouraged to speak out about their experiences of family violence. It will also try to identify role players and what they can do as role models, e.g. women assisting other women and men as models. All these will form the bases of the argument for this section of the chapter.

#### **5. 4.1. DEVELOPING A THEOLOGY OF UKUKHATHALA**

God's love for His people also means assuring the dignity of every person. We are called to tell people about God's love for them, irrespective of any situation. This will not be convincing if we are not also prepared to 'do God's love; to be the hands and feet of Christ'<sup>234</sup>. This means that we cannot hold back from getting involved in this crisis through our ministry, through our interaction with people in our communities and through speaking out in defence of those who are suffering stigma and discrimination. But this is not a simple matter and it is impossible for ordained clergy to achieve this alone.

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<sup>232</sup> See Koopman Nico 'Theology and the fulfilment of social and economic rights. Some theoretical considerations'. 2005:12

<sup>233</sup> Ibid. He strengthens his argument by saying that there are three approaches of decision-making namely the deontological and teleological as well as virtue approaches to ethics. For further that can be very helpful orientations to various approaches to moral decision-making amongst read M. Baron, P. Pettit and M. Slote *Three methods of ethics: A debate* (1999) Oxford: Blackwell Publishers; P. Singer (ed.) *A Companion to ethics* (2002) Oxford: Blackwell Publishers; R. Lovin, *Christian ethics. An essential guide* (2000) Nashville: Abingdon Press.

<sup>234</sup> 1 John 3:16-18, Mark 12:29-31, John 13:34.



The theology of *ukukhathala* that is being suggested should go beyond pastoral care, offer more in depth counselling. Traditionally in church circles *ukukhathala* is seen as the role of the pastor, hence 'pastoral care'. But in 1Peter 2:9 it clearly states that all believers are a royal priesthood. We are all called to bring praises to God's name. This breaks down the artificial barriers between clergy and lay people. It also calls us to share our knowledge and experiences with one another in order to strengthen the ministry. The theology of *ukukhathala* implies that every church has some service to offer. It does not simply say that we are all counsellors. *Ukukhathala* (care), means more than that – because counselling is offered during a time of crisis, but care is something ongoing.

*Ukukhathala* involves a real understanding of a person's social, physical and spiritual needs and a response to them. Above all, it means to be present, accompanying persons and walking their life journey with them. It is very much important to assist people in restoring their family lives or save a life that is becoming a victim of family violence. This implies that when the Christians do not help those in need, then we will continue to have disabled communities. This could be done by showing love and concern to those who happen to be victims of family violence.

Christ's ministry should be an example to us because He identified with the suffering of the people and he entered into it. Therefore, the church as the body of Christ, is called to enter into the suffering of others. We need to stand with them against rejection and despair. A group of people or individual members of a congregation can care, meaning *ukukhathala*, about others within the congregation whether the person is new or have been there in the church for a long time. Sometimes we find people coming to join churches because they want a place where they can be heard, healed and cared for. That is why it is important for us to try and respond to their cry by practicing and showing *ukukhathala* towards their situations. The sufferings and struggles of the people of God affect everyone.

In situations of family violence, we need to befriend members of the congregation who may need someone to talk to or someone to help with their problems. Abuse victims need to feel a high level of trust before they are comfortable to share their experience. We need to pray for fellow members, especially those who have experienced sexual, physical and spiritual abuse. We pray also for those who perpetrate such violence. Congregants can also encourage one another to volunteer for work in a helping agency that treats family violence victims or perpetrators.

It will be good also to see this theology of *ukukhathala* (caring) coming from below, challenging church structures in terms of their teaching, encouraging churches, schools and other agencies to teach non-violent parenting, sex education and children's self-defence. Again, it will be good to see congregants pushing the church's senior structures to urge legislatures to provide funds for shelters, and to contribute towards reconstructing the legal process so that victims of family violence will be treated respectfully and equitably.

#### **5. 4.2. STIGMA AND DISCRIMINATION<sup>235</sup>**

Stigma and discrimination is to look down upon a person with a personal problem that is known to the community, especially when a woman is not treated well and is abused. What is surprisingly funny is that women are doing this most of the time to other women. It is with their background that this matter needs to be discussed and solutions need to be found. Stigma is to look at a person with no respect and to describe that person in a disapproving way. It is associated with some diseases such as HIV/AIDS, and in other cases people who are divorced, or who are neglected and abused by their partners – such persons are always stigmatized and discriminated against. To be discriminated against and stigmatized is wrong because a person who is stigmatized and discriminated against does not feel comfortable with the group of people around him or her.

It becomes a challenge for the church to equip the victims as to how to deal with stigma and discrimination, as well as how to deal with people who always have that kind of attitude. The church has a duty to enhance awareness and banish stigma and discrimination. As mentioned earlier the church or ministers have a huge role to play because they attract huge congregations every Sunday and they can use their platform to encourage people to love one another and to care for one another instead of undermining others and humiliating them. Stigma and discrimination is dehumanizing and makes a person feel worthless. This should not be the minister's role only. The whole congregation should participate and take part in the fight against the stigmatization and discrimination against the victims of family violence.

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<sup>235</sup> This is the term that I borrowed from the world of HIV/AIDS writings, I think that it also fits very well in the situation of family violence, because women who happen to be victims of family violence are sometimes stigmatized and discriminated. It is unfortunate that they are discriminated by other women.

### **5. 4. 3. SPEAK-IT-OUT**

Those who are victims of family violence must be encouraged to speak about their experiences as part of their healing process. In this process, others will learn about this danger attacking our families. This is something difficult which might not be acceptable. “Speak-it-out” in this sense means to talk about one’s experiences, one’s sufferings and one’s joys. It means not to hide one’s feelings about something which surrounds one’s life. Part of our work as Christians is to speak out about family violence. This process of speaking out will enhance awareness and banish stigma and discrimination. As ministers, pastors or clergy we have a captive audience every Sunday and we can use the pulpit and any other platforms to encourage, love and care for those who are victims of family violence, whether a women or children. People who are victims of family violence should be invited to share their stories with the congregation so that others can learn from their experiences. This will make family violence less removed from the people.

Often those who are victims of family violence will be encouraged to talk about their own status once they have heard someone else doing so. People should remember that it is important to speak-out against or in opposition to violence against women and children. People should move away from pretending it is not happening in their homes and among church members. Silence and secrecy will only breed more violence at home. To encourage people to talk about family violence is the church’s task. This must be seen as the minister’s role but also a task for the members of the congregation as well as victims.

### **5. 4. 4. ROLE PLAYERS**

There are various role players that can help to address family violence. They come from circles of females and males. Here the following will be discussed: women assisting other women (5.4.4.1), and men as role models (5.4.4.2.).

#### **5.4.4.1. WOMEN ASSISTING OTHER WOMEN**

African churches are known to have strong women’s groups called Women’s Manyano (meaning Women’s Association). One is comfortable with the notion of women’s Manyano because it carries a weight and it involves its members in unity, action, commitment and responsibility. *Umanyano* has a sense of togetherness, to be together in our struggle, our joys and sorrow. Even

in this situation women must be together and speak with one voice against family violence and assist one another. That will be a means of showing ‘*ukukhathalelana*’ – meaning to care for one another. Women are capable of doing that. They have done so in the past and they never fail in doing things on their own. In one of his phases of ethical decision-making, Tödt argues that in order for anyone to respond to any challenge, one needs to accept that there is a problem and own it as his or her problem.

Associations do not deal with all these issues raised above. In associations they just meet for business and after that they forget about what is happening in people’s daily lives. In all denominations one will find that there are women’s *Manyano*. These *Manyano*’s have their constitutions and programmes for their life and work. Above all they also need to take into consideration of the issues such as family violence that are affecting some members of their *Manyanos*. Isabel Phiri argues that these groups need to be assisted to transform so that they can become centres of transformation for women.<sup>236</sup>

In her article she attempts to deal with the question that she was wrestling with – how women can move beyond the present status of abuse. Phiri raises four things that Kritzschmar has identified for the transformation of this culture.<sup>237</sup>

The first one is the development of self-esteem. Secondly, she mentions the importance of creating solidarity among women despite differences of race, economic status, education and cultural background. At this point Denise Ackerman<sup>238</sup> warns us that we should not undermine the issues that divide women as we make attempts to reach out to others. One concurs with what Denise Ackerman is saying because one cannot forget about the past. The past determines the future. The third point is a need for women to acquire skills to identify their own level of awareness of gender issues. Fourthly, Kretzchmar discusses the need for women to maintain the spirit of challenging patriarchy both through women’s groups and in public without fear of the consequences.

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<sup>236</sup> See Isabel Phiri’s ‘Why Does God Allow Our Husbands to Hurt Us?’ in *Overcoming Violence Against Women*. In the Journal of Theology in Southern Africa 114 Nov. 2002:27. Isabel Phiri is a professor of theology teaching African theology at the University of Kwa Zulu Natal.

<sup>237</sup> Ibid.

<sup>238</sup> See Denis Ackerman ‘Participation and Inclusiveness Among Women’, in *Groaning in Faith African Women in the Household of God*, (ed.) by Musimbi Kanyoro and Nyambura Njoroge, Nairobi: Acton Publishers. 1996:139.

#### 5. 4.4.2. MEN AS ROLE MODELS

As we begin to discuss this subject and make some suggestions, we need to understand that boys and girls are born and men and women are made. Men as role models mean that men have a responsibility of making boys into men by mentoring them. This simply means that when boys and girls are born they biologically represent their gender. With regard to men and women, it means that they are socialized to be responsible in their actions. A man and a woman are not born as such. In African culture when an elderly person is not responsible in his or her actions they are always referred to as a child, because of his or her conduct. One is taught to be a man or a woman. In America there is an organization that develops boys into men. Its main task is to teach boys at an early age about issues related to family violence. Here are some of the issues that they are raising in their programmes: boys need elderly men in their lives, they need our time and energy. This refers to our boys, grandsons, nephews, younger brothers. Men need to teach, coach and mentor young boys. They all need *you* to help them grow into healthy young men.

Boys are swamped with influences outside the home, friends, the neighbourhood, television, internet, music, movies...everything they see around them. They hear all kinds of messages about what it means to “be a man” – that they have to be tough and in control. There are conflicting and harmful messages being given to boys about what constitutes “being a man” in a relationship.

Boys need advice on how to behave toward girls. Boys are watching how other men relate to women to figure out their own stance towards girls. So they need to be taught early and regularly, that there is no place for violence in a relationship. It’s never too soon to talk to a child about violence. One should let him know how one thinks he should express his anger and frustrations and what is out of bounds. One needs to talk to him about what it means to be fair, to share and to treat others with respect. If it comes down to one thing one can do, this is it: simply being with boys is crucial. The time does not have to be spent in activities. Boys will probably not say this directly, but they want a male presence around them, even if few words are exchanged.

One needs to hear what he has to say. One needs to listen to what he and his friends talk about and ask him if he’s ever seen abusive behaviour in his friends. Ask him if he is worried about

friends who are being hurt in their relationships? Does he know if any of his friends are hurting anyone else?

Most of the time young boys and elderly men have a problem of expressing their anger. It is important to teach those ways of expressing their anger without using violence. When he gets mad, tell him he can walk it out, talk it out, or take time out. Let him know he can always come to someone if he feels that things are getting out of hand. Try to give him examples of what one might say or do in situations that could turn violent.

### **5. 5. VOLUNTEERS – Practicing *ukuncedana***

Another form of the church is that of Christian volunteers. This section will be looking at what the volunteers can do and contribute in practicing *ukuncedana*. *Ukuncedana* in isiXhosa can be defined as support. *Ukuncedana* as understood by African Xhosa-speaking people cannot be compared to helping or assisting a person, because the two words mean to do part of the work. Yet, *ukuncedana* means being with the person from the beginning until the end of the processes. One suffers with that person until what one has been doing is finished or over. A good example of this practice in an African context is that when a certain family is bereaved, those who are residing within the area will give support by physically being with that family. This can go to an extent of staying with that family until the funeral is over. Those who are giving that support put all their activities and interest into rest for the whole duration. It is believed in the African communities that if one part of the body suffers the whole body suffers.

In this process of *ukuncedana* as one is involved, one expects the same to be done to him or her when one is in trouble, hence it is called *ukuncedana* – supporting one another. The person who is being supported when everything is finished when he or she thanks those who supported them, will say in isiXhosa: ‘*nangamso nenje njalo nakwabanye*’ – meaning even tomorrow, do the same to others. As Africans we understand that we have to do more than saying thanks, but we have to encourage one another to work as a unit. After one has offered support one feels good because one has done a good deed unto someone else.

What this section is trying to do, is to bring that practice back even in the context of family violence. It is obvious that the victims of family violence need to be supported and even the perpetrators in the process need support in the process of rehabilitation. In an attempt to respond

to this challenge, this section on volunteers practicing *ukuncedana* will raise four points for discussion to be considered as a contribution to physical and material support (5.5.1) emotional support (5.5.2), men and awareness raising (5.5.3) and financial support (5.5.4).

### **5. 5.1. PHYSICAL AND MATERIAL SUPPORT**

In this case physical and material support refers to items that the victims might need for their survival. These needs might differ from situation to situation according to their experiences. The emphasis here is that if volunteers are charged to demonstrate *ukuncedana*, physical and material support should be the first to be considered. If a person has been physically abused the immediate need that one requires is security. By security it is referred to a place of safety. In this section there are few suggestions forwarded, to be considered as a practical response by volunteers. These suggestions may be helpful not only for the volunteers but also for the broader community.

Women who are experiencing crisis as a result of family violence, especially those who are abused, get ill and need help. What seems to be a small thing can make a difference between coping and not coping. Associations must be encouraged to be there for their members especially during needy times. If women are under stress because of family violence, most of the time they do not cope with their children and one will find that some lose their jobs. They will need support with the children and also material support. If possible, the associations can provide meals for poor families or those too sick to provide for themselves. But of course this cannot go on for too long. They can learn ways to teach their children to cook, do washing and clean the house, with the support and guidance received from other women.

People often think that when they have to offer support to people suffering as a result of depression, that they always have to talk. When one visits a person who is in such a situation, one does not have to feel that both have to talk. Silent company can also be a great comfort one's presence may well be enough, as long as one does not feel awkward.

Women need to be given support and encouraged to talk about their position in society and in their relationships. Women need to know that the church, society or the law does not sanction abusive relationships and that they will be supported only if they bring these into the open.

### **5.5.2. EMOTIONAL SUPPORT**

Physical and material support is always not enough to a person who is experiencing difficulties. That can be seen as part of the problem solving. There is another element of supporting a person, emotional support. This part of the section as an attempt to contribute to solving the problem, will focus on emotional support and trying to understand what it means and into what extent can it make a difference.

Emotional support means, “being there” for the person who is in trouble or in need. In the case of family violence the victim definitely needs that emotional support because in most case victims lose their identity. If one loses his or her identity one can also lose his or her self-esteem. Self-esteem affects one’s emotions. Giving one another that emotional support automatically grants assurance that one is not alone in his or her suffering.

In the case of family violence, it is proposed in this section that volunteers should practice *ukuncedana* by giving emotional support to victims during their time of need. Emotional support in this sense will allow victims to feel that they are still acceptable to the community despite their experiences. If victims are not cared for, it can easily result to something else. Some can commit suicide and others in the long run, can also become violent not only to their spouse but also to their children. One does not have to feel that one must solve their problems. One’s support may be all a person needs to have the courage to carry on. Although sometimes receiving training in counselling is important, in some ways every Christian is a counsellor, because as children of God we are called to be there for one another. Therefore, it is believed that if this suggestion of volunteers practicing *ukuncedana* can be taken into consideration it will make a valuable contribution in solving the problem and as well as offering support to the victims.

### **5. 5.3. MEN AND AWARENESS-RAISING**

In churches there are men’s groups that can also make a valuable contribution with regard to an attempt to respond to the challenge of family violence. Family violence awareness-raising programmes can be introduced and integrated into the activities offered at men’s groups. These could be in programmes where they explore together what it means to be a man in this day and age – this refers to masculinity; addressing issues of sexuality and what a life-giving relationship



is; trying to encourage men to express their feelings and work through conflict in a respectful manner. It is very important that men in the congregation understand the risks of multiple partners, both to themselves and the women they are with. Women's rights are being violated when they are infected with HIV and AIDS.

This awareness-raising can be done in different ways. Men's breakfast meetings or similar fellowship meetings can be used to raise awareness amongst men about the relationship between their behaviour and the breakdown in marriages and similar relationships, as well as the spread of HIV and AIDS. An opportunity needs to be provided for men to discuss issues affecting their relationships with their wives or partners, either in groups or with a counsellor. Men urgently need to be educated about the dangers and destructiveness of promiscuous sex practices.

Very few churches have ministries specifically geared for men, the issues around alcohol and drug abuse and yet, these are some of the major factors leading to family violence and the destruction of marriages and homes. Awareness must be raised around issues of rape. It is possible that some men do not understand the impact of rape and abuse. They need to be shown how they affect the identity and dignity of a person.

#### **5. 5. 4. FINANCIAL SUPPORT**

In the case of family violence, like in any other experiences of suffering, financial support is one of the greatest needs. In this section it is suggested that financial support can be one of the possible means of support that the volunteers could do to support the victims of family violence. This can demonstrate the practice of *ukuncedana*. This practice will not only benefit the victim financially, it will show the kind of love and care we have for one another as brothers and sisters.

Victims of family violence most of the time need financial support because most African women do not work as they are housewives. The whole family depends on the income of the father. This simply means that those who happen to be victims depend on their husbands and once they leave their home will definitely need financial support. The congregation, or church, can offer temporary financial support to the victim. . This cannot be a permanent arrangement because the church cannot afford to do that. Help can be given to meet needs like food, school fees for the children and many other needs that might be of great importance for the family at that particular moment.

## **5. 6. DENOMINATION – WORKING TOGETHER**

In this section the role of the church as denomination in combating family violence is investigated.

During the time of political struggle there were many popular slogans that were used to emphasize togetherness and unity – *ubunye*. One can recall slogans such as: ‘*ubunye ngamandla*’, meaning that “unity is strength”. These slogans helped the political organizations and liberation movements, including the church, to dismantle apartheid which brought about the oppression of black people and racism. Even now, as we are faced with our second struggle and challenge, the church, Christian believers, volunteers and congregations need to be united, working together in the fight against the scourge of family violence. *Amandla ngawethu* (we have power), we can still liberate women from this oppression and also liberate men from being perpetrators. These words calls for *Bambanani* – meaning that the church should hold hands in the fight against family violence.

### **5. 6.1. ESTABLISHING GENDER ISSUES COMMITTEES**

Churches should establish their own gender committees that will run with the project of family violence and monitor everything around the programmes. Nominations should be made by conferences or the general assembly of the church for accountability. These committees must be elected with clear terms of references so that they know exactly what to do. It will be important to have these committees in order to encourage the local congregations to be involved in this kind of project as a response to the challenge. Most of the churches must be given credit because they do have these committees, but one tends to believe that they are not doing anything about the challenge of family violence or very little. Some church committees on gender issues are not practical in their approach. They just write reports on the issues they hear and read in newspapers. We need more than that to try and achieve our goal of embodying *ubulungisa*.

These committees can pave the way for the church in terms of suggesting what could be done. They can raise awareness as well as support the victims of family violence within the church. All that we have suggested in this chapter can be considered by these committees in making a clear response to the challenge.

## **5. 6.2. EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMMES**

Education is the most important tool of empowerment. Educational programmes are important because they raise awareness about victims of family violence. Smith, writing in the context of the death penalty and restorative justice equipping the faithful when innocence isn't the issue, says that "it is about gaining knowledge of the scriptural, educational and historical roots of restorative justice and death penalty..."<sup>239</sup> This also fits very well into the context of family violence programmes for the people to gain knowledge of what the scriptural, theological and historical roots of bringing back *ubulungisa* (justice) to the people means.

These programmes should be structured in such a way that they respond to the challenge of family violence in our churches. Educational programmes should involve everybody in the church from children's ministry, youth fellowship, girl's association, men's association and women's association. This will help a number of people because most people are lacking knowledge when it comes to family violence related issues or even the Domestic Violence Act.

### **5. 6.2.1. RE-INFORCING CHRISTIAN EDUCATION**

All the programmes that are needed can be put in place, but without reinforcing Christian education nothing will be achieved. Reinforcing Christian education in this case means that churches should see the importance of teaching and empowering people in churches and non-church members. Christian education must not apply only during church service, it must be extended to the communities as well as to the homes.

It also refers to the empowerment of the church leaders. It is important for the church to encourage ministers and pastors to receive training so that they can be in a position to respond to social challenges. This will be discussed under the following continuous-theological training (5.6.2.1.1.) and theological institutions (5.6.2.1.2.).

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<sup>239</sup> See Melodee Smith, 'The death penalty and restorative justice Equipping the faithful when innocence.' in *Reformed World, Justice, Reconciliation, Community*, vol.52 Number 3 September, 2002: 23.

### **5. 6.2.1.1. CONTINUOUS-THEOLOGICAL TRAINING**

Continuous theological training can benefit ministers and pastors if it can be processed in terms of workshops, seminars and conferences or refresher courses. In these gatherings specific themes dealing with family violence will help ministers to be able to respond and make a contribution towards reducing family violence. Some of the themes identified will need experts in different fields of study to deal with them. People who have experience in dealing with problems in family violence need to be used. Professors and lecturers in theology faculties and seminaries will be of great help, as well in terms of teaching and presentations of their research work. The following themes can be considered of importance for ministers and pastors in training them for a practical response to family violence.

First, it is important to organize training on how to counsel victims and perpetrators of child abuse, spouse abuse, elder abuse and how to build self-esteem and self-respect. Many pastors and ministers have never had such training and may say the wrong things to victims or perpetrators. Sharing by victims must be included in such training. This kind of training may be facilitated by people who are experienced in this kind of work who will help ministers because they will be doing it from their experiences of dealing with victims and perpetrators. Pre-marital counselling should be included as part of counselling training. This will look at violence, non-violent conflict resolution, stress reduction and problem solving. This kind of training should assist ministers to be able to allow couples to know that violence is inappropriate and illegal and that help is available. They should be able to tell people that problems can be solved peacefully.

Secondly, preaching is a communication tool for the church and ministers. Here theology lectures and professors of theology can be of good help in teaching communication skills. This will help ministers to examine their own theology, sermons and attitude towards family violence. People need to hear messages about family violence as healing messages of hope as well as messages of encouragement. Some ministers cannot do this alone. They need to be assisted and helped to think about the process. Post-academic training will keep on reminding and challenging pastors and ministers about messages relevant to the congregation, what people want to hear and know. Pastors should consider whether their communication encourages families to deal with violence in their homes or to hide it out of fear that they will be perceived as poor Christians if their weaknesses become known.

Thirdly, the trainings can also focus on the legal aspect. This kind of training should focus on the bills and laws that are passed in parliament. This will help ministers to know and understand the laws and bills such as the Domestic Violence Act, to know the available resource centres, shelters, reporting locations and other sources of help around their areas so that instances of abuse may be legally and wisely handled. Such information should be made known to all members. The only people who can help to facilitate this kind of workshop are those who are working for NGO'S or are government employees in legal departments.

#### **5. 6.2.1.2. THEOLOGICAL INSTITUTIONS**

Theological institutions are places where candidates are being trained and prepared for the ministry. It is important for them to note the fact that their curriculum to a certain extent must be influenced by what is happening in society. That alone will help the institutions to shape their courses in such a way that they are able to equip their students for their future ministry. The denominations can make recommendations to theological institutions like seminaries and faculties of theology in the universities where their candidates are being trained, to include modules on how the church should respond to the challenge of family violence.

Denominations are the only organizations that can be of great assistance to the institutions of learning to identify burning issues within the communities and challenges in congregations. It will not be enough for students to be taught but they need to be involved in the practical aspect of dealing with the challenge of family violence. They must be exposed to such cases for them to be able to handle them. There are different ways in which candidates can be assisted and equipped to respond to the challenge of family violence in counselling the victim, rehabilitating the perpetrator, conducting the services in support of victims as well as promoting advocacy programmes and awareness-raising.

This dream and vision will not be realized without this partnership. The gap between theological institutions and churches must be closed and they need to work together in order to achieve the goal of peaceful and stable healthy families and relevant ministry to the situations.

### **5. 6. 3. FUNDING LOCAL CHURCHES**

Most of the time people dream dreams to assist others but they are always limited by funds. If the church as denominations sees the challenge of family violence as an important matter to be responded to, it means that something should be done. This aspect finally challenges the church to take the decision to make a change by making a contribution, doing something, getting involved. The churches cannot be able to fund such programmes like any other institution that have potential of funding projects, if they do not see a need. This always starts with seeing the need to help, accepting that that particular problem is a threat to society. With funding this programme the church will make a difference in the people's lives.

Funding will be one of the requirements to run this programme and human resources will also be needed for support. The denomination should be the vehicle for fundraising from the international world in support of the programmes dealing with family violence against women. This will be important for the question of accountability and fair distribution of resources to congregations that are involved in this ministry.

### **5. 7. ECUMENICAL CHURCH – “Breaking the silence”**

With reference to the ecumenical church, Smit begins by giving an analysis of the history of the ecumenical church during the struggle against apartheid and he further expresses his disappointment that the church has lost that sense of togetherness.<sup>240</sup> He further argues that the story of the churches in South Africa has been and still is extremely complex and confusing. It is a story of many stories, utterly unable to be told as a single story. There are simply many different churches doing different things. For that reason the ecumenical community has lost its influence and impact after the collapse of apartheid. Smit argues that there is no longer a common enemy and most churches have withdrawn into their own spheres of denominational activities if not congregational activities.<sup>241</sup> According to Smit, attempts to recover the prophetic ecumenical spirit and to engage churches in a common struggle against, for example HIV/AIDS, or the disastrous effects of the global economy, have mostly proven to be without visible success.<sup>242</sup>

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<sup>240</sup> See Smit 2004:8, 'The impact of the church in South Africa after the collapse of apartheid regime.' in *A New day dawning African Christians living the gospel, Essays in honour of Visser* 2004:8

<sup>241</sup> Ibid 2004:9.

<sup>242</sup> Ibid.

This raises a question as to what contribution the ecumenical church can make in combating family violence that is confronting our communities.

Koopman describes the role of the ecumenical church in terms of the priestly task, of showing solidarity with the marginalized and the wronged.<sup>243</sup> For him this priestly task carries a responsibility of care, compassion and solidarity as expressed in the various diaconal services of churches.

The ecumenical church has its aim to unite Christians in their struggle in the world. The ecumenical movement is the grace of God, given by the Father in answer to the prayer of Jesus and the supplication of the church inspired by the Holy Spirit. While it is carried out within the general mission of the church to unite humanity in Christ, its own specific field is the restoration of unity among Christians".<sup>244</sup> This definition of ecumenism gives us a clear aim of the concept of bringing unity among Christians in order to carry out the general mission of the church to unify humanity in Christ. Ecumenism brings together the people of God irrespective of race, cultural background and denomination to respond as a unit to the challenges facing our societies.

On the other hand, Yvette Noble Bloomfield, when she reflects on the question of ecumenism suggests that the church should form partnerships and work together as the body of Christ. For her, partnership among Christians is a gift of the Spirit in which there is a new focus of relationships in Christ that sets us free from others, many embraced that with particular intentions and interests in the *Missio Dei*.<sup>245</sup> This togetherness, unity and partnership of the churches will help the church as the community of believers to speak with one voice in breaking the silence of violence against women in our societies. Breaking the silence as one understands it, refers to disclosure not only in the congregation and denomination but contributes to the challenge so that it can be dealt with. The existing structures of the ecumenical church need to take this seriously so that the church can be seen as doing something for the people of God. Even the local churches need to be encouraged to break the silence of family violence.

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<sup>243</sup> See Koopman, 'Theology and the fulfillment of social and economic rights. Some theoretical considerations' 2005:10.

<sup>244</sup> See *Directory for the application of principles and Norms on Ecumenism* 1993:16.

<sup>245</sup> See Yvette Noble Bloomfield, 'Partnership and Empowerment; overwhelming violence against women' in *Journal of Reformed World Justice, reconciliation, and Community* vol. 52 no 3 September. 2002:130.

The findings of research done on breaking the silence indicate that, “a majority of respondents (77%) said that they had spoken to someone about the abuse in an attempt to seek help.”<sup>246</sup> The table below shows the places of disclosure and the percentages of victims that disclose in that particular place.<sup>247</sup>

Place of Disclosure	No. of Responses	%	
Family	62	20	60
Friends	45	21	44
Doctors	23	11	22
In-laws	19	9	18
Police	16	8	16
Religious leaders	11	5	11
Social Workers	10	5	10
Legal	8	4	8
Others (Neighbours/ Colleagues)	8	4	8
Nurses	5	2	5

The table above helps us to see the level of trust that people have in the church and also how involved the church is in crisis situations. This table does not reflect what the church should be doing. It says a lot about how people relate to the church authorities with regard to issues related to relationships. The level of trust is still very low as compared to the family; maybe it is because the church does not see itself as having a role in shaping people’s lives. Again, it might be possible that even people themselves are not open with their experiences when it comes to the church. These reflections come as a challenge to show *ukukhathala* and begin to work towards *ukunceda* – to assist the community by responding to their needs.

The ecumenical church on different levels (international, national, provincial and local) can launch various joint efforts to combat family violence.

<sup>246</sup> See Tanga Jacobs and Fatima Suleman *Breaking the Silence: a profile of Domestic Violence in women Attending Community Health Center*. 1999:26.

<sup>247</sup> Ibid.



### **5.7.1. INTER-DENOMINATIONAL REHABILITATION CENTRES**

The rehabilitation programme that we have already discussed was on a denominational level and the one that we are suggesting will be all encompassing. It will be a joint effort from all the churches that have seen and accepted the problem and wish to respond to the problem. This rehabilitation centre will help everybody irrespective of his or her denomination.

### **5.7.2. ABOUT SHELTERS**

Victims or survivors of family violence, one thing that they need as an immediate response is their security; therefore, shelters are part of security measures that can be granted to survivors. Once people report or disclose their state of affairs to the person responsible for the day to day businesses of the church, the first thing that needs to be established is the safety of the person. If that particular person's life is at risk at her home a referral should be made. The point here is the importance of the shelter for referrals.

If there are no shelters existing in an area it is the duty of the ecumenical church to see that places of safety for the people are built or identify a place that can be used as a shelter. This can be seen as the contribution from the side of the ecumenical church working together with the community. On the other hand, if there are existing shelters what the church can do is to support those existing shelters to avoid duplication of what is already exists. The support that the church can offer can be, firstly, financial support in terms assisting with maintenance of the property. Secondly, supplying food parcels for the residents to be able to feed themselves and their children, if there are any staying with them. Thirdly, the ecumenical church can support by means of offering the person power, to help in terms of security for the place, cleaning of the place, assisting with cooking and also ministering to the victims. Lastly, the church can also assist with some programmes if a need arises and assist with administrative needs – people with expertise can be approached to work on a voluntary basis.

These shelters can be built in such a way that they become family centres, which include children who are orphans. This will help those women who happen to be victims of family violence not to long for their family life. By building shelters the church supports and takes ownership of the problem of family violence; the church will in turn be doing community service. In these shelters there should be programmes of empowerment preparing these women for their future. They

should not be seen as holiday resorts, rather as places of healing, safety and preparation. Churches should also play an important role in these shelters by rendering some services.

### **5. 7. 3. PROGRAMMES ON MORAL RENEWAL**

For Koopman this is what he would call Public Theology in the church. His emphasis on this is based on his understanding of Hauerwas's description of public theology.<sup>248</sup> He argues that "Hauerwas' view on the public role of the church is perhaps best described by this one-liner: 'As such the church does not have a social ethic, the church is a social ethic'<sup>249</sup>. His reaction in support to this is that the church should be peace-makers in the world not peace-lovers and also in that process they should see that *ubulungisa* (justice- righteousness) is done. This argument of moral renewal will be pursued further in our concluding chapter in our recommendations.

Here are a few suggestions that should be considered, as the church attempts to establish programmes on moral renewal:

- Capacity building of community members and leaders
- Awareness-raising on gender violence
- Counselling and victim empowerment programmes
- Rehabilitation of perpetrator.
- Men Against family violence

This should be the public role of the ecumenical church in its attempt to make a contribution to the overcoming of family violence.

### **5. 7. 4. VOICE OF THE VOICELESS – Prophetic ministry**

By this notion of the voice of the voiceless it is meant to speak on behalf of others. Most of the time people outside their cries are not heard or listened to. Probably some fear to speak about their situations and others cannot even begin to speak on publishing morality issues. Being the voice of the voiceless is not something new, especially in the history of South Africa. During the history of the struggle for liberation in South Africa the church leaders were the voice of the voiceless, denouncing apartheid system as evil. During this period so many people died and others disappeared until this day. Life was unstable, morality was a problem and others were

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<sup>248</sup> See Koopman 'Some comments on Public Theology'

<sup>249</sup> See Nico Koopman, 'After ten years. Public theology in post apartheid South Africa' Ned Geref Teologiese Tydskrif Deel 46 Nomers 1&2 Maart & Junie 2005:153

leaving under difficult circumstances. Njongonkulu Ndungane refers to that era as a period of repression.<sup>250</sup> What we are experiencing is not different from our previous struggle but the only difference is that it is happening from home and at the end, affects the happiness of the family, the whole community, society and becomes a national problem. This is also our intensive repression but the battle field is different. Ndungane continues to argue that it was in this milieu that Desmond Tutu emerged as a voice of the voiceless, proclaiming the imperative of God's justice and thereby becoming God's messenger of hope in an environment of despair and despondency.<sup>251</sup>

At times like these when women and children are treated unjustly in their homes by their husbands, it is then when the voice of the church is needed most. It is the time when the church is expected to speak loudly with one voice declaring family violence as evil. In our response as the church to the challenge of family violence we need to speak with one voice. It is the church's responsibility to encourage people to condemn family violence and not to be silent, as if there is nothing happening whilst women and children are suffering and men in some instances. This voice from the church will be the most powerful weapon to fight this horrible enemy in our homes because to some extent our people are God-fearing people.

While we all have a special duty to act with love and respect towards those who are victims of family violence, we are also called to be a prophetic church and people. We have a calling to challenge our government to see that its policies and acts are properly implemented. Smith pushes this matter further by saying that to be the voice of the voiceless, means "speaking out against injustice and sinful policies, taking action to witness to our faith and providing support for survivors by working to establish a justice that heals, that is a formidable advocacy which is urgently needed"<sup>252</sup> By so doing, the church will be embracing *ubulungisa* and showing *ukukhathala*.

#### **5.7.5. NETWORKING WITH OTHER ORGANISATIONS**

Churches cannot work in isolation from other institutions that are also responding to the challenge of family violence. It is important that the church establishes contact within and later partners

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<sup>250</sup> See Njongonkulu Ndungane, "UTutu Ngumntu lowo" in *Archbishop Tutu: Prophetic witness in South Africa*, (eds.) Hulley L, Kretzschmar L, Pato L. Human & Rousseau, Cape Town, 1996:71

<sup>251</sup> Ibid.

<sup>252</sup> See Melodee Smith "The death penalty and restorative justice Equipping the faithful when innocence" in *Reformed World, Justice, Reconciliation, community*, vol.52 Number 3 September. 2002:120

with other organizations. Other organizations can share their experiences in working with the victims and perpetrators. Furthermore, churches will be helped to make referrals as well.

### **5. 7. 6. OTHER FORMS OF SERVICE**

There are a number of steps churches and pastors should take to address family violence and abuse. A congregation collectively should consider the following, in addition to the immediate crisis intervention steps of separating the perpetrator from the victim and offering aid and safety to the victim:

- a.** Study the general theology of the church and its local interpretations to see whether the bible and theology are being used to condone violence or to promote growth, wholeness and health.
- b.** Plan worship services and congregational life so as to celebrate positive role models and involve all people. Make visible and intentional efforts to affirm all people and to bolster their self-esteem.
- c.** Offer open discussions and information sessions on the topic of family violence so that members become aware of the problems, the facts, the studies and appropriate authorities. Children, especially, should be encouraged to speak confidentially to trained teachers and pastors about sexual and physical abuse. They need to know somebody cares.
- d.** Offer opportunities for parents and spouses to participate in programmes, which teach peaceful means of parenting and settling disputes, such as assertiveness training, parenting, effectiveness, couples communication and systematic training for effective parenting.
- e.** A study group within the congregation could design models for steps to be taken by the victims, perpetrators, the congregation, the pastor and the appropriate secular institution. Collect a list of local resources such as organizations which respond to victims and perpetrators, legal aid, emergency shelter, food pantries, amid other necessary agencies. Publicize this information in the congregational newsletters, bulletins, counselling bulletin boards, etc.
- f.** Consider declaring the church a sanctuary, or provide a shelter as a safe haven for anyone who is in danger from hostile family members or provide transportation and financial aid to bring victims to an existing shelter.

- g. Open a 24-hour hotline or join with other churches in sponsoring, urging people to call when they are in danger and in need of counselling, protection or shelter away from an abuser. Support your local existing shelters.
- h. Open a day care centre for children and for disabled and elderly persons, so that family caretakers may have respite from the heavy demands made on their physical and emotional energy. Exhaustion, frustration amid the lack of expressed appreciation may lead to violent acts.
- i. Plan a way for the congregation to offer encouragement and direction to all family members who are involved in violent situations. Such people deserve the church's support in seeking a healthier and more peaceful way of life, even if that means living apart from abusive partners. There should be no doubt in either the man or woman's mind that the health and safety of individuals are far more important than the preservation of a destructive marriage.

## 5. 8. CONCLUSION

This chapter was looking at how the church could respond to the challenge facing communities and could make a valuable contribution. The whole chapter has followed Smit's description of ecclesiology as the methodology to search what the different levels of what the church can do and what are they currently doing. As this chapter was examining and investigating possible responses of the church, it is obvious that these reflections are not enough. If these possible suggestions and proposals can be implemented they will definitely make a great difference in people's lives. The church will be seen as the church for the people and the church of the people. By the church of the people it is referred to the church that cares for those who need help.

The whole chapter was trying to challenge the church from different levels as explained by Smit, to be committed to its calling hence the title: 'A calling of the church – A theology of *ukuzinikezela*'. It has clearly been demonstrated throughout the chapter that this theology of *ukuzinikezela* must reflect *ukukhathala, ukuncedana, and ubulungisa*. That alone will be a public statement for the church that is called by God.

Words cannot stop weapons, statements will not contain hatred. Person by person, family by family, neighborhood by neighborhood, it is important that communities and families are taken away from the evil and fear that come with so much violence. It is believed that our faith in Jesus

Christ gives us values, vision and hope that can bring an important measure of peace to our hearts, homes and streets.

A number of issues are being raised and suggested as the way forward and as the church's contribution. The next chapter will address the topic towards theology of transformation and reconstruction of families.

## CHAPTER SIX

### TOWARDS THEOLOGY OF TRANSFORMATION AND RECONSTRUCTION OF FAMILIES

#### 6.1. INTRODUCTION

How can the church then respond to the challenges of prevalent family violence? In order for the church as denomination, congregation, worship, ecumenical, Christian believers and as volunteers to do what is proposed in chapter five, we need some internal transformation.

The second chapter attempted to provide a broad picture of what is meant by family violence, distinguishing between different categories of family violence. Such distinctions are necessary in the processes of ethical decision-making since they help us to see, accept and describe the problem more carefully and adequately. The third chapter offered a broader analysis of the nature of the problem by drawing on some available statistics. Following that, the fourth chapter considered some available, possible responses from different institutions as to how they have been handling the situation. The previous chapter (Chapter 5) then concentrated specifically on the calling of the church, a theology of *ukuzinikezela* or commitment. The current chapter concludes the thesis by suggesting concrete recommendations as a remedy to this challenge, not only confronting the church, but the whole of society. This chapter wrestles with the question: what can be done about the problem? In responding to this question, the final and crucial task of taking concrete ethical decisions, according to Tödt's analysis, is embarked upon.

It became clear from the argument presented, that everyone should be involved in order for the response to have a real chance of being effective. Both perpetrators and victims, or survivors of family violence can all make a contribution. This problem is so complex that urgency requires everyone to be involved. The ethical question is not merely one for a specific group or a specific segment of society, but rather a question facing and challenging the entire community. Therefore the question as to how we do it together becomes the central ethical question for the whole society, involving both individuals and all social institutions as moral agents.

## **6.2. DISCOVERING THE ROAD TO TRAVEL<sup>253</sup>**

As an attempt to rediscover the road that must be travelled in order to change our situation, we need to be confident that what we do will make a difference. In this process of discovering the road to travel, the following six issues are suggested as the way forward: the road towards reconstruction and transformation of families (6.2.1), healing of families and relationships (6.2.2), developing responsible citizens (6.2.3), community-building (6.2.4), re-orientation of men (6.2.5) and re-socialization of the agents of socialization (6.2.6).

### **6.2.1. The road towards transformation and reconstruction of families**

Transformation and reconstruction are two processes that are suggested here as the way forward towards finding the solution to the problem. This refers to transforming and reconstructing our families. Important reasons for transformation and reconstruction can be learned from theological work as well as from the work on a theology of *ukuzinikezela* outlined in the previous chapter. Transformation in this context refers to a complete change in our families in terms of our lifestyle and attitudes as well as our behaviour towards one another. Reconstruction refers to the rebuilding of our families with reference to our relationships, both between husbands and wives and between children and parents. Behind the deliberate choice of these two processes lies an ethical concern about the declining family values and norms in our families and societies. The process of reconstruction and transformation is always informed by how we see and understand our situations, whether they need to change or not.

It must be understood that transformation is a process of gradual social change and development. The main purpose here is to propose constructive ideas as to how we can develop homes to be safe homes for every member of the family. The intention is not to discuss the concept but rather to raise certain questions as to how the process makes a contribution to remedying the situation.

In the past, in South Africa, the church spent its energy and time in fighting a battle against the system of apartheid. This system oppressed and dehumanized people, especially black people in this country. Lessons learnt concerning transformation can now be applied in this new struggle that our society faces. The church should once again find a way of responding to this new giant

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<sup>253</sup> This is a phrase that I have borrowed from P. Meiring used in his paper that he presented in a conference hosted by EFSA in 1994. He was addressing the topic 'Transition and Transformation: A Challenge to the Church' 1994:25 . (Ed.) Koegelenberg Renier.



known as family violence that is now oppressing and dehumanizing women and children, leaving some women and children with scars that cannot be easily healed.

Depending on how it is understood and which theory is used, transformation in itself is not enough. Reconstruction is also of crucial importance. Since not all understandings of transformation explicitly include theories of reconstruction and commitment to processes of reconstruction, it may also be necessary to focus specifically on the need for reconstruction and on theories helping us to deal with reconstruction. So, what does reconstruction mean and do we have theories that can help us to deal with reconstruction? Is there a proper theology of reconstruction? Two social theological ethicists from the University of South Africa, Kretzschmar and Hulley become helpful in offering a clear understanding of the theology of reconstruction. Kretzschmar and Hulley writing about the ethics of reconstruction argue that the church must now contribute to restoring the years the “locust has eaten” (JL 2:25)<sup>254</sup> They both take this argument further by saying that the church needs to remind the people that they, as individuals, possess an inherent dignity because they have been created in the divine image (Genesis 1:27). The church must emphasize this teaching and must encourage people to believe in this dignity (self-esteem), to value this dignity and to respect this dignity in others so that no one should be able to disregard, undermine or remove this dignity from themselves or others.

Human beings have been entrusted with the task of making the place they live in an environment fit to live in. What does this mean to us as the church, denominational, ecumenical, congregational, worshipping Christian believers and volunteers? The church has a responsibility to see to it that people make it a shared responsibility to care for creation. In other words, a theology of responsibility calls the church and civil society to care for what it has, for the place people live in and for families. Today what needs to be done is to transform homes into environments fit for families to live in. This may involve transforming homes from being places of family violence to being places of dignity, care and mutual respect.

The church’s immediate resource which it can use as a tool to reconstruct homes is the bible. The bible can provide powerful and rich images that serve to motivate citizens to build this new

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<sup>254</sup> See Kretzschmar and Hulley, ‘The ethics of reconstruction’, in *Questions about life and Morality Christian Ethics in South Africa today*, J.L. Van Schaik books, Pretoria. (eds.) Louise Kretzschmar and Len Hulley. 1998:23.

communal future.<sup>255</sup> It further provides some practical examples in which people are found rebuilding countries, homes and lives. Kretzschmar and Hulley specifically refer to the post-exilic literature including Haggai, Zechariah and Isaiah 56-66. On the other hand, the influential ethicist Charles Villa-Vicencio adds more aspects which can be considered important sources for a theology of reconstruction.<sup>256</sup>

The church at all different levels as explained by Smit, needs to become involved in the efforts to realize the vision of reconstructing our society and with regard to this argument Kretzschmar has this to say: “The churches, based on their understanding of who God is and what God wants for humanity, need to be involved in the attempts to provide housing, education and employment to a very needy population. They also need to constantly be the watchdog for abuses of human rights and misuse of political and economic power. The point becomes even clearer when one considers some of the possible obstacles that prevent reconstruction and development from taking place. These include selfishness and corruption on the part of the people who are supposed to be putting programmes into place”<sup>257</sup>.

In the light of this statement by Kretzschmar, seen in the context of family violence, it is obvious that the church must be involved in educating families with regard to good and healthy family life. Again, to educate people in churches and communities about human dignity and human rights is not only to educate but also to watch for abuses of human rights because family violence is a violation of human rights. In short, such a theology of transformation and reconstruction is of crucial importance as a first step along the road towards the healing of families and relationships. Churches and Christians must be committed to transformation and reconstruction. They must firmly believe in its importance otherwise the practical steps to follow will not have the necessary and lasting results. Churches and Christians must believe that radical transformation is needed, given the nature of the challenges and they must be committed to reconstruction, based on the dignity of human beings. This faith, this theology of transformation and reconstruction is the first, crucial step.

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<sup>255</sup> See Kretzschmar and Hulley 1998:238, also Villa-Vicencio C.A. *Theology of reconstruction. Nation building and Human Rights*. Cape Town David Philip 1992.

<sup>256</sup> See Villa-Vicencio 1992: 27-30.

<sup>257</sup> See Kretzschmar L., ‘Reading the Bible in context: *Reconstructing the lives of people and communities*’ In Kretzschmar L. and Richards R. (eds.) *Reading the Bible in context: Reconstructing South Africa*, Johannesburg: Baptist Convention of South Africa, 1996:59.

### 6.2.2. Healing of Families and Relationships

Such a commitment must then become practical and concrete. The church is immediately confronted with the challenge and the dilemma of responding to the anger of the perpetrators as well as the fear of the victims. The victims are concerned about their safety if they remain in their relationship with the perpetrator. This is where the idea of the healing of families and relationships comes to the fore, as a major practical challenge for the church. One could ask the question as to why churches should focus on the healing of families. The answer will be that the family is where human beings are brought into the world, nurtured, supported and grow to participate in society. The Namibian Lutheran theologian and ethicist P.J. Isaak writes that, “It is where we are loved and experience intimacy, meaning and joy, but also where we experience pain, alienation and sometimes abuse”<sup>258</sup>. The heights and depths of the human condition are manifested in family life.

For Denise Ackermann, such healing is inseparable from justice seeking. In a context of a history glutted with blatant injustices, doing justice is an inescapable priority.<sup>259</sup> This simply means that the church should guarantee that *ubulungisa* or justice is being done to the victims of family violence and there should be no cheap forgiveness and reconciliation, precisely in order for healing to take place. Healing in suffering from the effects of violence and broken families is, however, a very complicated issue and can easily be misunderstood and mishandled. The church should never forget nor ignore the violence and attempt to bring healing, while ignoring what happened or may still be happening. The church should not strive for healing while forgetting that we are dealing with victims and perpetrators. Healing is something radically different from mere silence.

The church should play a leading role in terms of helping men who are perpetrators to begin to acknowledge their sins of being abusers by confessing their sins. Throughout this research project we have been talking about victims and perpetrators, the sinners and sinned against, women being the sinned against and men being the sinners and perpetrators. Therefore, if we need peace, justice and reconciliation, men should confess their sins before seeking forgiveness. Botman argues that the religious notions of reconciliation expect from perpetrators an ethical commitment

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<sup>258</sup> See P.J. Isaak ‘Justice and Healing in Families’ in *Journal of Religion and Theology in Namibia Vol.4*, 2002:36. He is a lecturer at the University of Namibia, teaching Ethics in the Department of Religion and Theology.

<sup>259</sup> See Ackerman. D. ‘Lamenting Tragedy from the other side’ in *Sameness and Differences, Problems and Potentials in South African Civil Society, South African Philosophical Studies*, 1 2000:219, she was writing in the context of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission.

to making redress, restitution and reparation. No confession is complete, at least not as far as the bible is concerned, unless the person has converted in the broad and narrow sense of the word.<sup>260</sup> If this kind of a process is not being followed, healing of the families or relationships will be a cheap healing. The processes of reconciliation must be followed whereby the sinner confesses his sin before asking for forgiveness and the sinned against must be given an opportunity to respond in the processes. In the processes of healing we will have to be careful, lest we be seen to be silencing the victims. That is exactly what the well-known theologian Tinyiko Maluleke calls the 'silencing mechanism.'<sup>261</sup> What Maluleke is saying here is that as the church we need to learn from the process of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission that in the process it advantaged some people, especially the perpetrators, and disadvantaged the victims.

Again, as mentioned previously, the family is the place where we learn our basic sense of justice, especially what is right and what is wrong, what is bad and what is good. It can also be the place where blatant injustice is impossible to control since it is often met with silence especially at the expense of those who are vulnerable.

It is against this background that there is a need for the healing of families, due to the wounds that members of the families themselves inflict upon one another. This research has identified the fact that silence regarding what is taking place in family life, which is assumed to be private and kept within the family circle, can become a veil covering the pain and injustice that should be brought into the open if there is to be healing and justice in the families. In this case, if women continue to be silent about their pain and struggle no one will be able to assist them in terms of healing their

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<sup>260</sup> See Botman, 'The Offender and the Church' in *Facing the Truth, South African communities and the Truth and Reconciliation Commission*, (eds.) Cochrane, De Gruchy J. and Martin .S. H.R. 1999:130.

<sup>261</sup> See Maluleke. T.S., 'The Truth and Reconciliation Discourse: A Black Theological Evaluation' 1999:107, where he contributed to a book called *Facing the Truth, South African communities and the Truth and Reconciliation Commission*, edited by Cochrane. J, De Gruchy. J, Martin.S. Maluleke was writing here in the context of the Truth and Reconciliation process emphasizing the question of certain voices that are absent from current reconciliation discourse. He uses the words of Grunebaum-Ralph saying that, 'as a silencing and censoring discourse reconstruct the sentence. This devalues the experiences of the thousands who have been forcibly uprooted from their homes, displaced into hostile environments which could not sustain life, forced to carry passes, as well as those who endured torture and human rights violations in the name of legitimate opposition to that system.'" The point that is being made here by Maluleke is that the absence-silence of the black and the poor are not matters merely and openly and not only external to the truth and reconciliation process. He sees the process itself as part of the silencing process. He further takes note of what Grunebaum-Ralph is saying, as he warns of the manner in which the notion of reconciliation and healing are privileged and foregrounded over and above notions of justice, capability and restitution that tend to obscure and minimize the differences between the victimized on the one hand and the perpetrators and the beneficiaries on the other.

pain. Healing itself is a painful process and it must be done with sensitivity especially for the victim.

### 6.2.3. Community-building

If the first practical step forward for a theology of transformation and reconstruction is focussing on healing families, the second step will certainly have to be to contribute to the healing of the broader community life as well. Families are embedded in the life of the community and it will be impossible to heal broken families if life in the broader community is not healed as well. The church should therefore not only focus on separate families but also on the broader community as such. The first question that comes to mind when talking about community building is what community means. Myandu in his article ‘*Ubuntu* as the basic authentic humanity,’ defines community in African thinking and cultural practices in a helpful practical way. The community is the context and focus of all human activities, as it is thought to be the arena and grounding of human existence, particularly at the family level in its indefinitely extended broad scope.<sup>262</sup> The famous African theologian John Mbiti clarifies this question by saying the following when he defines the community and stresses its importance in Africa:

“African traditional life is largely built on the community. Since the church is also a community of those who have faith in Jesus Christ, this overlapping concept should be exploited much more on the African scene, particularly in terms of the family, relatives, the neighbours, the departed, the question of mutual interdependence and sustaining of one another in times of need.”<sup>263</sup>

Another African theologian Gabriel Setiloane concurs with Mbiti’s idea of community when he writes: ‘John Mbiti is right when he changes the Cartesian dictum to “I belong, therefore I am.”’<sup>264</sup> His contention here is that there is no person who does not belong. Belonging for him is the root and essence of being. He further argues that the whole system of African society and the ordering thereof is based on this.<sup>265</sup> Everyone has someone he or she belongs to, who should reap the benefit of his or her life, or take on the responsibilities that arise out of that life. Our first

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<sup>262</sup> See Mnyandu *Perspectives, in On Ubuntu, A tribute to Fedsem, Mayibuye I-Afrika Series* (eds.) Khabela and Mzoneleli 1998:74.

<sup>263</sup> See John Mbiti ‘*Christianity and African Culture*’ in *Journal of Theology for South Africa*, Issue, September 1977:31.

<sup>264</sup> See Gabriel Setiloane, ‘The African theology, an introduction.’ 1986:10.

<sup>265</sup> See Gabriel Setiloane 1986:10.

responsibility as community is to build a violence-free community, a community that values life and human dignity.

Africans in fact, usually put community before the individual because without the prior existence of the community, no individuals would be born. Human beings or individuals are born out of and into the human community, by which they are socialized into becoming responsible human beings. This simply means that it is important to make a contribution in terms of transforming the community, because our lives are built on our communities. For instance, if we have immoral communities we will automatically have immoral families. Likewise, if our families are immoral our communities will be affected. It is from this background that we need to develop responsible citizens (6.2.4), re-orientate men (6.2.5) and re-socialize the agents of socialization (6.2.6). The questions of “how” and “by whom” therefore become a challenge for us. All these phrases mentioned above will form part of our discussion on building our communities.

The emphasis here is not on discussing the concept but rather to look at what contribution the community can make in terms of transforming and reconstructing families. For Augustine Shutte, the starting point for community-building is within the family and society as educators.<sup>266</sup> What Shutte does here, is to elaborate on the task of the community in terms of community-building from an education perspective. The community can strengthen the teachings of African ethics to the younger generation. Participation also becomes extremely important here. The community must participate in programmes of nation-building or transformation. The church should take the fact very seriously that reconstruction is necessary, not only for the nation or a country that has suffered the lack of social justice, but also for our communities and families that lack justice towards women and children. Reconstruction is towards correcting that mistake in order for justice to prevail. Kretzschmar puts this very clearly, that the bible teaches us that life in the community was part of the divine creation of humankind. Humankind was to use and care for the resources put at its disposal. It was, however, not intended to be the domain of a select few.<sup>267</sup>

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<sup>266</sup> See Shutte, ‘*Ubuntu, An Ethics for New South Africa*’ 1997:106 in this section of his book the emphasis is that there are other important agents of deliberate education. He sees society as a whole as one such agent. He further argues that no single family can realize in itself all the rich possibilities that the human community is capable of. Therefore his contention is that there is a built-in-dynamism in family life to connect with other families, to provide the necessities of life and to develop the possibilities of community life more fully.

<sup>267</sup> See Kretzschmar 1998:239.

When we talk of reconstruction and community-building we mean that people themselves need to be transformed. They need to be delivered from the shackles that have held them captive, as Kretzschmar rightly puts it.<sup>268</sup> Amongst other things, they need to be delivered from the cultural practices that do not lead to a more humane future. Certain cultural practices can inhibit people from risking to create a new future for themselves. For the people to be able to develop, they must be liberated from the bondage of the past. Hulley, a South African ethicist and a lecturer of ethics at the University of South Africa, argues that this will enable communities to develop freely their potential to choose from their past what can make a contribution towards the future.<sup>269</sup> Kretzschmar makes a challenging statement, that in order for people in churches to contribute towards the future, they themselves must be transformed so that they can exercise an appropriate ministry in the world (Romans 12:1-8).<sup>270</sup> About the process of reconstruction and rebuilding Carmichael has this to say:

“Our own activity meets God’s activity in both individual and social spheres. Just as in our individual spiritual life our own efforts to become new people meet the transforming power of God’s grace, so in our efforts to create new societies we discover that we are co- workers with God in realizing God’s vision for the world.”<sup>271</sup>

#### **6.2.4. Developing Responsible Citizens**

In this context, responsible citizens refer to people who are able to assist during a time of need. It means loving and caring people, thereby contributing to the building of a humane community. One cannot claim that we have a caring, loving community in the midst of violence and rape. People who love their community or whatever belongs to him or her and takes care of it and looks after it well; he or she becomes responsible for it. A responsible person is always concerned about what is taking place around him or her.

Therefore, people who do not treat their families well are not responsible citizens because they do not have a sense of good will. We become responsible only when we belong. Some cannot act responsibly if they do not see the reason for acting in a responsible manner. This poses a major

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<sup>268</sup> Ibid.

<sup>269</sup> See Hulley, ‘On being human criteria for judging development and development aid’. Utrecht: Stigting Pressa Trajectina 1980:190.

<sup>270</sup> See Kretzschmar 1998:239.

<sup>271</sup> See Carmichael L., ‘Creating Newness: The spirituality of reconstruction’ in Hulley L, Kretzschmar L and Plato L.L. (eds.) *Archbishop Tutu: Prophetic witness in South Africa*, Cape Town Human and Rousseau. 1996: 185.

challenge that people, especially men, must learn to be responsible especially for their actions. It is a challenge to any attempt to build humane communities, but it is also a challenge to which churches and Christians can certainly make practical and concrete contributions.

In an attempt to develop responsible citizens, the Gospel of Matthew, especially the section on the beatitudes, can be a powerful tool for engaging people and teaching them how to be responsible. The beatitudes can be also used as an example of moral formation. In support of this argument, Morgan emphasizes the fact that among scriptural texts it is pre-eminent in teaching the qualitative, ethical content of the Christian life.<sup>272</sup> According to Tödt's sixth step of decision-making, Mouton argues that Tödt stresses the fact that knowledge influences our decision to change, because we know our situation.<sup>273</sup>

The first beatitude starts by requiring us to acknowledge who we are and what our responsibility is. In having this knowledge of our situation, we will be humble. This will lead us to recognize our need for inspiration. Shinn also sees the need for using the beatitudes since for him, the beatitudes of Jesus tell us how the kingdom of God reverses our thinking.<sup>274</sup> The obvious situation here is the terrible situation of family violence that leads to the moral decay of family life. The beatitudes in the Sermon on the Mount touch on these aspects of life i.e. self-realization, purity, having good heart, being merciful, loving, peace-making and lastly, being good disciples.

De Villiers in using Smit's model of the church suggests two proposals. He argues that "(1) the church denomination and individual Christians have the responsibility not to ignore the pressing and often completely new moral issues that are thrown up in life spheres... (2) Church denominations and individual Christians have the responsibility to form their own Christian views on issues of public morality."<sup>275</sup> This simply means that the church's first responsibility will be to confront these moral issues and develop Christian ethical views that are based on religious teachings. The church has to participate in public moral debates in an attempt to make a contribution towards developing responsible citizens. D.J. Smit gives us some insightful comment on morality and responsibility.<sup>276</sup>

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<sup>272</sup> See Morgan J.L. *'The Sermon on the Mount'* 1980:1.

<sup>273</sup> Mouton 1985: 240.

<sup>274</sup> See Shinn.R.L. *The Sermon on the Mount, a guide to Jesus' famous Sermon*,1954:15

<sup>275</sup> Etienne de Villiers, 'Public Morality in the South African Context' in *The Scriptura* 82. 2003:33

<sup>276</sup> See Smit 'Morality and Individual Responsibility', in *Journal of Theology for Southern Africa*, December Issue 89, 1994:19-28. In this article Smit raises four comments on the important ethics of responsibility. (a) Firstly, under the heading, 'On morality and Society': On this Smit interrogates Dr.



### 6.2.5. Re-orientation of Men

From the nature of the problem of family violence, it will be clear why a radical re-orientated humane future is necessary. A theology of transformation and reconstruction cannot ignore this difficult task. Family life will not be healed, community life will not be rebuilt and responsible citizens will not be developed if specific attention is not paid to the re-orientation of men.

It is obvious that we cannot deal with re-orientation without looking at the actual orientation and its outcomes. The orientation and upbringing of men has been seen as one of the contributing factors towards family violence against women. In the light of this it is important to look at how we can change the situation and the mindset of men. After taking men who are perpetrators through the process of rehabilitation it is important that they should have support groups that will ensure that they do not go back to their old habits. Workshops can be used to consider the question of family responsibilities and gender roles.

The church must take this as its responsibility, assisting in the process of the re-orientation of men. This process can take different forms e.g. workshops and educational programmes in men's associations or meetings. If this process does not take place, it is possible that our communities and families will continue to experience what the *kairos* theologian Albert Nolan calls the cycle

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Isaak's argument. Dr Isaak presented a paper at a conference on 'Morality and Individual responsibility.' He argues that when we are, therefore, talking about morality and individual responsibility, we are affirming that morality forms the basis, the social fabric, of any society. The emphasis in his argument is on the question, what is individual's responsibility towards this common life, towards this moral fabric of society? What is the individual's responsibility towards a good society? (b) Under the heading 'On the importance of responsibility', Smit argues that in any pre-modern, homogeneous society, ordinary people just know how to live, what to do, and what not to do and how to behave themselves. For Smit, simply knowing the story is not enough. Responsibility also entails accepting the full story. For him accepting the story does not mean that one likes it, but because there is no alternative. (c) Thirdly, under the heading 'On responsibility and Christianity' his claim is that scholars agree that responsibility normally means that someone is responsible to someone or something. Here Smit gives us a clear basic structure of responsibility that, 'I am responsible to the teacher for my schoolwork. We are responsible to our parents to be looked after. The government is responsible to the people for the way they govern.' For Smit throughout the Bible Christians are called to live responsibly *Coram Deo*, before the face of God in the world and history. (d) Fourthly under the heading 'on individual responsibility', Smit challenges us with what he calls fundamental questions such as: what is the individual's responsibility towards this common life, towards this moral fabric of society? What kind of human beings are necessary for a society? What is the individual's responsibility towards good society? He further asks questions, what is possible, what can we do? What can, I do? Smit points us to three aspects of this question namely; identity, integrity and involvement. Strengthening his argument he uses two popular ethicists in the world of ethics of responsibility, i.e. Stanley Hauerwas and Gustafson, one of the most influential North American ethicists and also a Niebuhr pupil and follower.

of sin.<sup>277</sup> As explained before, family violence takes place between the sinner and the sufferer, the sinner being the man and the sufferer being the woman. The cycle means that family violence repeats itself all over again because nothing is being done about it. Nolan takes this process a little further and says that there is a sequence or logical order that we need to recognize, namely: **sinner** ⇒ **system** ⇒ **sufferer**.<sup>278</sup>

The diagram below is used to show the cycle of violence. What this diagram suggests is that if nothing is done about it, it will continuously repeat itself. Men will always victimize their wives, and again, if women do not report abuse and prefer to be silent about it people will not see anything wrong with it.

### The cycle of violence



Should men change and realize the damage that they have caused their families, they should be given the responsibility of mentoring young boys. Boys need advice on how to behave towards girls. Mentoring boys can mean coaching the boys into responsible manhood. This mentoring of boys is a process. The question remains as to what can be done and how can it be done? In order to have responsible men in the future men must dedicate their lives, their time and their energy in helping boys grow into healthy young men. On the question of how this can be done, the following can be considered: (1) **teach them early**: their fathers should talk to the boys about family violence. Let the boy know how men think. He should be able to express his anger and frustration, but know what is

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<sup>277</sup> See Nolan. A. *God in South Africa, The challenge of the gospel*, WM.B.Eerdmans: Grand Rapids Cape Town 1988:97.

<sup>278</sup> Ibid. 98.

out of bounds. Teach the boy what it means to be fair and how to share. Boys must be taught how to treat others with respect. (2) **Be there:** This will help in preventing bad influences. We must make time to spend with our boys. Just being with your boy is crucial. The time does not have to be spent in activities. What boys need is to have a male presence around them, even if few words are exchanged. (3) **Listen:** is to have an ear as to what is being said. It is important to listen to the young boys because it helps to understand how they think and what they think about others. Listening to young boys helps to know how they talk with friends about girls and how they relate to them. Listening also creates an opportunity to inquire more, questions like ‘have you ever seen abusive behaviour in your friends?’ and how they understood such behaviour. Listening to them, how they feel and how worried they are when any of their friends are being hurt in their relationships. (4) **Tell your boy how to express** anger without being violent. When your boy gets angry, tell him that he can walk it out, talk it out, or take time out. Let him know that he can always come to you as the father, especially when he feels that things are getting out of hand. Try to give examples of what he might say or do in situations that could turn violent.

The church can adopt the same approach. Congregations have a similar programme for junior boys in the congregation. In the church it can be in line with the Christian teaching on how to be responsible young men. It must not be seen as a family matter only. Everyone must make a concrete contribution in mentoring young boys.

#### **6.2.6. Re-socialization through the agents of socialization**

In the section that dealt with causes and complicating factors of violence, research revealed that agents of socialization played a major role in contributing to the struggle of family violence that was experienced by women. These agents were the family, education (school curriculum, textbooks), media, gender roles, religion and religious images and culture. These agents of socialization can still make a contribution in changing our situation provided that they have been through the transformation process. This section will use a few examples of the agents of socialization to see how they can make a contribution in changing the situation. It will focus on three agents, because this is where the moral formation of a person takes place. The three agents of socialization that will be dealt with are: the family (6.2.6.1), education (6.2.6.2) and religion (6.6.2.3).

### **6.2.6.1. The family**

In our endeavours to re-socialize families, Augustine Shutte suggests that *ubuntu* should be the highest value that is nurtured within families.<sup>279</sup> The family can contribute in re-socializing its members by being involved in changing the attitude of boys towards girls. Parents are the originators of the family and therefore carry the ultimate authority and responsibility. They should use this authority. This responsibility extends to the claim the child has on the very life of its parents. Shutte further argues that in any moral choice, different basic values must be weighed up against each other and assessed in the light of concrete circumstances.<sup>280</sup> As sociologists maintain, J.P.G. Meiring concurs that the family is the cradle of citizenship since it is within the family that a child first learns, or fails to learn, the essential qualities we so clearly need in our society: honesty, trust, loyalty, co-operation, self-restraint, civility, compassion, personal responsibility and respect for others.<sup>281</sup> This clearly means that the family in its teaching must go beyond what can be done or enforced. This is the challenge for families, knowing very well that stable families in many African communities are very few. This has been caused by the legacy of apartheid that led to the breakdown of family life.

In the report of the Moral Regeneration Movement (MRM) 2002 in Pretoria, the concern of family life was raised. The rebuilding of family relationships was at the top of the agenda. The family is still regarded as the major tool for nurturing sound ethics and behavioural and social values in the community. This means that the family can play a major role in shaping our communities but they also need to be strengthened so that they can be more effective.

### **6.2.6.2. Education**

In education there are two elements that can be very influential in contributing to change and moral formation, i.e. curriculum and sports science. Currently in South Africa the issue of education is still a problem that is debated. J.P.G Meiring makes some interesting observations that are contained in the U.S. Report, which South Africans might choose to take seriously.

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<sup>279</sup> See Shutter 1997:96. For Shutter this means that in every sphere we must look for the way in which our human nature can best develop to fulfillment. He further sees the natural community of mother, father, and child as the fundamental human community out of which all others grow. His argument is that if the main work of society is to produce persons then the family is the key to the human health of society. If there is something wrong with the family life in a society then that society will be sick. What this means is that the church, civil society and the government is there to protect family life and enable it to flourish.

<sup>280</sup> See Shutter 1997:97.

<sup>281</sup> See Meiring J.G.P. 'Moral Regeneration: Seedbeds for Civic virtue' *HTS* 59(4) 2003: 1225.

“If you look only in one place to take the deepest measure of our civilization, where would you look? Some would choose to look at our religious ideas and institutions; others choose our systems of higher education. Especially in our era, when the social authority of religious belief was weakened, and when more young people than ever go on to some education from higher education...”<sup>282</sup>

This actually emphasizes the importance of education in our lives, because it can be a good measuring instrument to determine who we are, who we are becoming and where we are going. If change and moral regeneration in our homes, families and societies is our priority, education should be seriously considered as a tool to be used. It will be important as well to introduce a curriculum that will inculcate the culture of respect for one another irrespective of gender, age, and race.

Sport as an important element of education and moral formation should be encouraged in young people at schools. It must be practiced in such a way that it does not discriminate at all in terms of gender. It must emphasize the skills and values of participation, respect, tolerance, understanding and patience. These values will help our youth to develop an attitude of team-work, caring for one another and discipline.

The report of the Moral Regeneration Workshop<sup>283</sup> reveals that the commission, having reflected on the history of education and its impact on the society, went on to consider how education specifically could contribute in the campaign for moral regeneration. It came up with the following suggestions for educational systems as their contribution towards making a change:<sup>284</sup>

- Firstly, it endorses the principle of embarking on a clearly visible campaign in the manner of the ‘Arrive Alive’ campaign. The Department of Education could provide a leading role in this campaign and place it on television, at schools and in the homes;
- In the short-term, regular community based workshops on moral regeneration can be organized;
- Moral education is already included in the school curriculum. This has to be highlighted and implemented as a long-term investment;

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<sup>282</sup> See Meiring J.G.P. 2003:1232.

<sup>283</sup> See Moral Regeneration Workshop 1&2 Report 2003:13.

<sup>284</sup> See Moral Regeneration Workshop 1&2 Report 2000:13.

- Creating a family base for moral education must take place.

### **6.2.6.3. Religion**

Generally speaking South Africa is a religious country and is dominated by the Christian religion. The call to personal and communal accountable behaviour is the responsibility of all religions in seeing that moral, ethical behaviour is taught. The churches or religious communities are expected to play an important role in rebuilding the moral fibre of the country. With reference to the survey conducted by the Human Sciences Research Council in 2000, Meiring argues that the church is still the most trusted institution in society and he claims that this leaves the church with a great challenge. He further raises the question as to whether churches, with the different denominations in South Africa, will use the trust vested in them wisely.<sup>285</sup>

## **6.3. ADDRESSING STRUCTURAL CAUSES**

This section will be addressing the structural causes of family violence as identified by the research work mentioned earlier. This process will help in providing suggestions that will be formulated as a response to family violence. It will focus on the following issues as structural causes and will recommend how these can be addressed to resolve the problem, i.e. African women and culture (6.3.1.), African women and unemployment (6.3.2.), and African women and poverty (6.3.3.)

### **6.3.1. African women and culture**

In the chapter that dealt with the causes and consequences of family violence, the research attempted to reveal the current status of certain women and why it is so. It is difficult to understand what is going on in our communities without considering their history. As far as one understands and knows from experience, African women were the most respected section of people in Africa as the whole. Even the way they were called and still are called in certain areas, especially among the amaXhosa or the abeNguni tribe, where they are known as *Amakhosikazi* – demonstrates the respect accorded to them. *Inkosikazi* is an isiXhosa word, derived from the word *Nkosi* meaning ‘king’. The status of women within the family in the olden days was equivalent to that of a chief in the community. As is generally known, chiefs were the most respected people in the community and as such they were treated with respect. Therefore women were also treated with respect within the family. They had all the powers within the family. It was their

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<sup>285</sup> See Meiring HTS 59 (4) 2003: 1229.

responsibility to look after the day-to-day events or business of the family. It is also known that according to African culture men do not own their homes. They are owned by women.

With the introduction of apartheid, the inequality within the family emerged. Gross and Bringham argue that the system of apartheid placed heavy burdens on both male and female Africans.<sup>286</sup> The burden that the writers were referring to affected the family life of African families, especially the women. Apartheid has thus had some special implications for African women. Firstly, because of its policies regarding terms of employment, the Group Areas Act and the Pass Laws, it brought about the problem of separation of families. Gross and Bingham contend that the apartheid system assumed that only those workers necessary to white employment would be allowed on the 87% of land assigned to whites.<sup>287</sup>

Women were separated from their husbands because of these restrictions. Under this system, African workers had to have 'passes' to show that they had a temporary right to be in certain areas. This separation of the families really damaged African families. In the process, women lost their respect and dignity. There was no more family life at home because there were members who were no longer part of the family and these were the father figures. Family roles and family responsibilities changed because of the system. Women now became dependant on men for their financial support. Most African women were not educated and they could not easily find employment and even those who were educated did not get good employment. As a result they earned low wages.

Later in the process, men became used to the system and saw women as their dependants and no longer their equals. This, as mentioned in the previous chapters, made a great contribution towards family violence. Men saw this as an opportunity to ill-treat women because they were the providers and they had the economic power. Therefore, apartheid contributed to changing the social status of women, especially African women. The current government is trying to address this problem and for a number of years the focus has been on the development of women. This development of women, in terms of empowerment, neglected men in the process. This created a further problem, because today we have empowered women who know their rights and have good employment. On the one hand, some men have been retrenched and are unemployed. Thus, their social status has changed, leading many to feel disempowered. Something needs to be done about

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<sup>286</sup>See S.H. Gross and W.M. Bingham *Women in Africa of the Sub-Sahara* Vol.2 20<sup>th</sup> Century. 1982:20

<sup>287</sup> Ibid

the situation of men who have become victims of change and transformation in order for them not to react violently within their families. This can be the role of the church, in co-operation with other stakeholders to address this situation.

### **6.3.2. African women and unemployment**

The outcome of this research has also shown that women's unemployment has been one of the contributing factors to their suffering and abuse by men. This problem of unemployment has created a dependency syndrome for women to depend on men financially. Because of the financial dependency they developed, women resorted to being silent about their experiences of violence or a survival strategy has been to remain silent. The rate of employment of women outside the home, especially for African women, in the past and even now in certain areas are still low and the majority of those who are working are working as domestics or in factories. The proportion of women in the paid labour force, nevertheless, is well below the average. The government is trying its best to respond to this problem by developing policies on employment and gender equity.

Because of this, there is no more separation according to so-called 'women's work' and 'men's work'. The government has dealt with occupational segregation and that is laudable. Owing to all the experiences of the past, the government has tried to change the conditions of employment and increase equity to the point of retrenching some men and demoting others. It is understandable that these changes are an attempt to address the problem of women's economic dependency on men but what has been the result is that they have become victims of their circumstances. As much as it is appreciated the very same tool could cause more problems, instead of redeeming the situation in some families. The problem here is that, automatically, some men will lose their status of being breadwinners at home and the pride of being providers within the family. This might result in causing even those responsible men, because of embarrassment, to act irresponsibly. The argument here is that these processes must be balanced and monitored so that none is harmed in the process, because they are not actually addressing the problem but rather responding to part of the problem. Now it becomes the responsibility of the church and some civic organizations to assist men to understand all these social changes.

### **6.3.3. African women and poverty**

For many years poverty and financial insecurity has been an obstacle hindering women from moving out of abusive relationships. This problem of poverty affecting women is a consequence



of unemployment. There has been considerable progress in attempting to address the increasing burden of poverty. Gender equality is one of the factors of specific importance for eradicating poverty. Efforts should be made by the government to integrate a gender perspective into poverty eradication policies and programmes.

The government should be applauded for the contribution that it has made to eradicating poverty through social grants, food parcels and other efforts for women and children in our communities. Despite all these efforts the church still has a role to play, because these food parcels and social grants are not taking away the problem of family violence. Rather they are responding to the problem. Churches and civil organizations need to work very closely with women in terms of offering security, shelter and advice and giving them hope for a better life.

#### **6.4. A NEED FOR MORAL REGENERATION**

If there is a need to change communities, it means that a programme for moral regeneration should take place. A moral regeneration programme will be an attempt to address all the challenges raised as well as come up with preventative strategies. This section of the chapter will pay special attention to the following issues: understanding the concept (6.4.1.), respect for life (6.4.2), human rights and human dignity (6.4.3) churches' responsibility (6.4.4.), replacing the culture of violence with peace (6.4.5.) and living as disciples (6.4.6.) All these issues will be discussed as part of human formation in an attempt to address the question of family violence.

This section will try produce suggestions as to what could be the contribution of the church in an attempt to combat family violence. The different forms of the church as explained by Smit and discussed as the model for the church's response have become extremely important to this section of the chapter. The issues raised above can be linked to the different forms of the church, looking at what the ecumenical church, the denomination, congregation, individual Christians and volunteers can do.

##### **6.4.1. Understanding the concept**

According to the report of the Moral Regeneration workshop 1 & 2, the present initiative on Moral Regeneration is an initiative of the politicians and ironically, the religious sectors that should have taken the initiative and seem to have taken a back seat.<sup>288</sup> This was a concern raised by participants of the workshop who were drawn from the religious sectors. This clearly means that

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<sup>288</sup> See Report on Moral Regeneration Workshop 1 & 2, 2000:9.

the community or civil society is still looking up to the church to take the lead in addressing these issues. Again, the same report raises a concern that religious communities are talking of fellowship whilst they are divided according to their religious identities. This state of division alone becomes a challenge for the religious sector, as while it is divided there is little or nothing at all to achieve. This possibly explains why moral summits are convened by politicians and not by the religious leadership and there seems to be a lack of concerted and co-ordinated action from most religious leaders in promoting the struggle against immoral behaviour.<sup>289</sup>

The participation of the religious sector is seen and will always be seen as important in exploring the possibilities of participating in the campaign for a moral society. The message that the report of the workshop was putting across for consideration was the fact that religious sectors can do something about the bad moral behaviour which is the product of the daily struggle for survival. The commission, according to the report, made the following proposals that the religious sector could consider as their contribution in the campaign for a moral society:

- Resuscitating African spirituality, paying special attention to forgotten African values and disseminating these through education, the liturgy and media;
- Developing a culture of responsibility, emphasizing the role of the family and the importance of family values;
- Training the family, youth, children and adults in problem solving and making right decisions;
- Focusing on children, especially the homeless;
- Lessening guilt preaching.<sup>290</sup>

#### **6.4.2. Respect for life**

This research project has discovered in its findings, that there is a lack of respect for life and respect for one another. This lack of respect leads to cruelty and immoral acts towards each other. The church, together with civil society must find ways of restoring respect for life in our homes and societies. Respect for life must not just be a slogan or a programme; it must be seen as a fundamental moral principle coming from our teaching on the dignity of the human person. It must be understood as an approach to life that values people over things. Respect for life must

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<sup>289</sup> See Report on Moral Regeneration Workshop 1 & 2, 2000:9.

<sup>290</sup> See Report on Moral Regeneration Report 1 & 2, 2000:12.

guide the choices we make as individuals and as a society. Respect for human life is the starting point for confronting a culture of violence.

Many men address their family problems by being abusive towards their wives and children. People must be taught that violence is not a quick and easy answer to complex human problems. Violence is not the solution. It is the clearest sign that we are failures if we are violent. It demonstrates that we have lost our respect for human life. The question will be how we teach young boys and girls to curb their violence, while adults embrace it as the solution to their family and social problems. We need to learn to affirm and protect life. A fundamental ethic of respect for life should be central for all.

#### **6.4.3. Human rights and human dignity**

As the research indicated, family violence is a violation of human rights, it means that there is a need to consider how the churches can promote human rights and human dignity. Human dignity, according to Huber, has appeared in two distinct forms in European tradition.<sup>291</sup> In every community or society there are norms that protect human life and dignity. Human rights can be broadly defined as rights which human beings are entitled to and which no one can deprive them of.<sup>292</sup>

On the other hand, the popular German ethicist, Huber, defines human rights in a broader sense as those rights due to all human beings irrespective of their skin colour, nationality, political or religious convictions, social status or economic influence, gender or age. He further argues that these human rights are concentrated around the freedom and equality of humans as well as the share they have in social goods and political decisions.<sup>293</sup> Etienne de Villiers has his own way of defining the concept of human rights. He goes on to say that human rights serve as a common set of minimal legal and moral criteria that, on the one hand, set limits to the exercise of political and

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<sup>291</sup> See Wolfgang Huber: *Violence The unrelenting assault on human dignity*. 1996:115. The first distinction according to the specific rank of particular persons within a society, the concept of dignity (*dignitas*) (don't quite understand this) and he argues that it can be related to that of honour. His second distinction that he identified is that which distinguishes humanity from all other forms of life and gives a reason for its special position in the cosmos. He acknowledges that both Greek and Roman philosophies used both forms. Here he makes a comparison between the pre-Christian antiquity and the Christian tradition and he comes up with the conclusion that dignity in the in pre- Christianity. On the other hand in the Christian tradition the conviction that all human beings possess equal dignity gained the upper hand from the very beginning, stressing the equality of God's children. According to Huber those who respect the God-given equality of human beings take this dignity of human beings seriously.

<sup>292</sup> See the document on Respect for Human Dignity, [www.ncte-in.org/pub/unesco/ch14.htm](http://www.ncte-in.org/pub/unesco/ch14.htm).

<sup>293</sup> See Huber Wolfgang: 1996 122 *Violence, The Unrelenting Assault on Human Dignity*.

economic power, since they prohibit behaviour that violates the dignity of the human person. On the other hand, they provide a moral and legal framework for the positive formulation of moral and legal responsibilities.<sup>294</sup> Human rights ensure not only living conditions but also the basic conditions required to live with dignity. Human rights are designed to protect individuals from the threat to life and human dignity.

Villa-Vicencio sees theology of human rights as contributing to a better understanding of humanity, as a basis for the promotion of such rights that sustain human dignity. He further argues that a theological silence in the face of human rights violations can only be construed as morally repugnant and socially irresponsible.<sup>295</sup> This contribution of Villa-Vicencio on the theology of human rights shows that very often human rights are violated because of the lack of understanding of what it actually means to be human. Also, if people understand humanity they will definitely know and sustain human dignity, because the abuse of women undermines the dignity of those, particular women as persons.

What this says to us as the church and to the individual Christians is that we cannot be silent whilst someone else's rights are being violated. What we need to do is to protect the rights and the dignity of all human beings. Theologically, human rights have to do with the realization that all people are created in the image of God, enjoying equal human worth. Villa-Vicencio argues that the church's primary task is clearly to facilitate Christians to promote and appropriate the values of a human rights culture.<sup>296</sup> On the other hand, Villa-Vicencio in strengthening this idea, argues by quoting the words of Winston Ndungane, a popular South African church leader:

The doctrine of human rights is man's attempt at exercising his responsibility as God's steward on earth. It seeks to challenge all the injustices that distort the image of God in man. It is an attempt to establish a social condition where there are harmonious and peaceful relations among the people of the world, and where people are able to realize their full potential as God created them. There is some kind of relation that exists between the notion of human rights and the Christian doctrine of man.<sup>297</sup>

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<sup>294</sup> See Etienne de Villiers, *Human Rights and Moral responsibility: their relationship in the present South African society* D1, 41:2000: 214.

<sup>295</sup> See Villa-Vicencio 1992:123.

<sup>296</sup> See Villa-Vicencio 1992:126.

<sup>297</sup> Winston Njongo Ndungane, *Human Rights and the Christian doctrine of man*. A dissertation towards the degree of Masters of Theology submitted to the faculty of Theology, King's College, University of London, September 1979.

It is equally important that in the light of what Ndungane is saying, as the church and Christian believers we need to establish social conditions in our families and homes where there will be harmonious and peaceful relationships between parents and children, husbands and wives. If this harmony and peace starts at home within our families, it will automatically move to our communities. Villa-Vicencio contends that the obligation of the church at the same time reaches beyond the confines of its own members. He sees it as having to share in the promotion of a wider culture within which there is sensitivity to, and support for, human rights.<sup>298</sup>

#### **6.4.4. Churches' responsibility**

De Villiers cautions the church that even before it jumps to respond to the issue of human rights and human dignity, "the first responsibility of the churches in South Africa is to get clarity on their Christian ethical view on human rights and moral responsibility and the relationship between them."<sup>299</sup>

As churches together with other stakeholders in our societies, we need to develop consciousness of human rights, because they are so important in that they are strong factors in peace-making. Most conflicts arise from a violation of human rights. The acceptance of these rights mentioned above is not sufficient. There is a need to have determined action to make human rights a reality in our homes and societies. It should not be the government's and the civil organization's responsibility to ensure them, but rather a responsibility for every citizen.

Etienne de Villiers emphasizes the fact that the churches have a responsibility to educate their members on this positive correlation and to be proponents of both moral responsibility and human rights in the ecumenical fellowship of churches and society at large<sup>300</sup>. Education about human rights should be one of the weapons that can be used to restore human dignity. Schools and churches have the responsibility to educate the next generation on human rights. It will not be enough to do only this, but will also require an indication of the basic values embedded in them. Although curricula have it as a unit, generally it is taught only at the cognitive level. Such an academic learning has little impact on actual behaviour. It is merely about memorizing the articles in the convention and that does not go far. What is necessary is to help learning them in a

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<sup>298</sup> Villa-Vicencio 1992:127

<sup>299</sup> See Etienne de Villiers, *Human Rights and Moral responsibility: their relationship in the present South African society* D1. 41. 2000:220.

<sup>300</sup> See Etienne de Villiers *Human Rights and Moral responsibility: their relationship in the present South Africa* D1. 41. 2000: 220.

manner that the respect for human dignity is internalized and becomes a part of one's character. We need to search for effective methods of teaching human rights at schools and in our homes.

One critique of the current approach to teaching basic human rights is that it ignores the responsibility side. It over stresses the rights and this has led to an imbalance of civic consciousness and human relationships. The message that is always put across to people is "fight for your rights, neglect your responsibilities." As much as we are saying here that people must observe human rights what is more important, is that they must be responsible and know their duties.

Etienne de Villiers raises what he calls the second comprehensive responsibility of the church, that is, the responsibility to promote respect for human rights and exercise moral responsibility in both church and society by addressing these prohibiting factors.<sup>301</sup> He does not agree with Stanley Hauerwas that churches should rather refrain from any direct social involvement in society, because such involvement in modern liberal democracies would be counter-productive (Hauerwas 1991:45-68). Etienne de Villiers believes that both the priestly and prophetic tasks of the church inevitably lead to such involvement.<sup>302</sup> To promote moral responsibility and human rights in society, church involvement in combating factors like poverty, unemployment and the disruption of family life is essential.

For the moral formation of church members, Etienne de Villiers makes a number of suggestions for consideration that can make a great impact on people's lives.<sup>303</sup> He raises extremely important issues that the church can use in its ministry towards moral formation.

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<sup>301</sup> See de Villiers. E, *Human Rights and Moral responsibility: their relationship in the present South African society*. D1. 41:2000:220.

<sup>302</sup> Ibid. D1.41: 2000:221.

<sup>303</sup> See Etienne de Villiers D1.41. 2000: 221-223 The points that he raises are as follows: Firstly, he argues that, Stanley Hauerwas, as well as other theologians who stress the importance of virtue ethics, have taught that normal practices like worship, prayer, religious education, Bible study and charity have a very strong influence on moral formation of church members. These practices for him must not be taken for granted that they will lead to a positive moral formation. He encourages churches to strive to utilize the potential of worship and other church practices creatively to strengthen their member's capacity to check moral responsibly. Secondly, he emphasizes the fact that South African churches should have the courage to confront openly immoral behaviour by their members, but also negative attitudes, beliefs and values they adhere to that contribute to moral responsibility. He finds it extremely important that these negative attitudes, beliefs and values should not only be criticized. Members should also be given pastoral guidance to repentance, to more constructive attitudes, beliefs and values and to a morally responsible life-style. Thirdly, he raises the fact that attention to the formation of moral virtues does not suffice. Rather, it is important to equip church members with the skills of moral discernment that would enable them to take morally right decisions on their own. Lastly, he argues that people who have no hope for the future are

As we move to the next sub-heading of this section, we need to develop sensitivity to the deep suffering experienced by human beings, especially women and children in situations where their natural rights are removed. As we have discussed in the previous chapters, it has become clear that the abuse that is taking place in our homes is a violation of human rights, the natural rights of being loved, taken care of and enjoying security as well as respect. A person who is deprived of these natural human rights feels socially rejected. All violations of human rights are violent acts, because they involve depriving a person from fulfilling his or her needs. The churches can play an important role in strengthening human rights as well as the culture of moral responsibility in our communities and homes. It is also the church's responsibility to express approval for both moral responsibilities and human rights. The next step that must be considered is how we replace the culture of violence with the culture of peace.

#### **6.4.5. Replacing the culture of violence with peace**

From the research project we have noted the amount of violence that takes place within our homes and societies. Homes that are supposed to be places of safety and happiness have turned into being places of injustice and violence. Huber in his writing about minimizing violence suggests that the Sermon on the Mount can be our reference. He writes: "the ubiquity of violence was countered by Jesus in the Sermon on the Mount with the images of non-violence."<sup>304</sup> He further argues that the Sermon on the Mount is not a simple proclamation of a universal renunciation of violence but rather it calls for persistent and imaginative efforts to decrease violence. Our families and societies need a moral change to replace this culture of violence with a renewed ethics of justice, responsibility and love. The policies and programmes that we have, as much as we need them, cannot substitute the recovery of old values of right and wrong; respect and responsibility, love and justice. The wisdom of God, love and commandments can show us the way to live and to reconcile our differences.

Because of this culture of violence in our homes and societies some women and children have a fear of staying in their homes. Women fear their husbands, girlfriends fear their boyfriends and children fear their parents. This becomes a challenge for the church and civil society to work hard

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much more exposed to the temptation to act in a morally irresponsible way. Once more according to him it is therefore of pivotal importance that South African churches convey effectively the Christian message of hope and its meaning in the South African society.

<sup>304</sup> Huber, *The Unrelenting Assault On Human Dignity*, 1996:130

at trying to offer hope in place of fear, to fight violence with programmes of peace and to strengthen families.

#### **6.4.6. Living as disciples**

The church as the body of Christ must be an important voice against all forms of violence not only family violence. The church must also focus on violence of every kind that undermines the lives and the dignity of families and children. Above all the church must be a community of faith reaching out to affirm and protect life, teaching right from wrong, educating the young, serving the hurting, healing the wounds, building community, praying and working for peace.

As disciples, in the church, our faith and facilities can bring hope and safety for those seeking refuge from abusive homes. People can be peace-makers in their homes and communities. Churches can work together in organizing mentoring programmes for parents. The churches can be the first points of referral for women abuse. There are a few possible things that can be done by churches and these are as follows:

##### ***-In worship and preaching***

The family can be a powerful means of promoting the scriptural call to peacemaking. Worship also deepens our own relationship with Jesus, who is the source of true peace. During special services like Advent and Lent, people can be called away from aggressive and violent behaviour to that of peacemaking. Preachers should be asked and encouraged to consider how their preaching can be a call to peacemaking.

##### ***-Education***

As disciples we will have to continue to offer a moral and ethical foundation. The schools can also play a role by teaching basic values and conflict resolution. In our Sunday school education programmes the church can provide the values and support that can help people to choose life and reject violence. Churches should in their programmes promote justice and resist violence.

##### ***-Family ministry***

Churches should initiate family ministry since the family is the key to the development of positive values which include peacemaking. Families should be encouraged to talk about how violence affects each member. They should be taught how to respond to issues in a non-violent manner. Those families that are experiencing family violence should be encouraged to search for



helping organizations to assist them in overcoming this burden of family violence. Family ministry can provide support groups, marriage preparation and programmes that encourage faithful, healthy and peaceful relationships.

## **6.5. Contours for an African ethical response to family violence**

This final section endeavours to demonstrate the ethical response to family violence in terms of indigenous African, especially Xhosa, moral values. A need for moral regeneration alone is not enough. The next step is something deeper that we can learn from and that is what is called African ethics. Like any other community, Africans have been wrestling with moral issues related to every aspect of their life for a long time. A well-known South African advocate for African theology, Bonganjalo Goba, argues that African concepts of morality are reflected in idioms and special sayings and rituals which seek to generate moral integrity.<sup>305</sup> African ethics are believed to be part of moral formation and from that we can identify a few possible and popular convictions and beliefs for Africans that constitute part of moral formation, as well as transformation and reconstruction in the context of family violence. In demonstrating that, this section will focus on the significance of *ubuntu* (6.4.1), embodying *ubulungisa* (6.4.2), restoring *ukuhlonipha* (6.4.3) and revisiting the culture of *ukuncedana* (6.4.4). These will be discussed in the context of family violence, trying to find out how they can be of help in transforming men in the community.

### **6.5.1. The significance of *Ubuntu***

This section will attempt to consider how the concept of *ubuntu* can help us in terms of reshaping our communities and families. According to Ramose *ubuntu* as a concept and experience is linked epistemologically to *umntu*, 'the person'. He further argues that on the basis of this link, *umntu* posits *ubuntu* as its basic normative category of ethics.<sup>306</sup> One of the great popular philosophers in South Africa, Augustine Shutte, has done a thorough study of the concept of *ubuntu*. He tried to link two different traditions of ethical thinking, that of the European and the African. For him *ubuntu* is the name for the acquired quality of humanity that is the characteristic

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<sup>305</sup> See Goba B 'The Norms of *Ubuntu* and *Ukuhlonipha* in African ethics', in *Perspectives on Ubuntu A Tribute to Fedsem*, (eds.) M. Khabela and Z.C. Mzoneli 1998:82. Fedsem is the abbreviation of Federal Theological Seminary that used to be at the University of Fort Hare and later moved to Pietermaritzburg. It is where ministers of different denominations of the mainline churches were trained and prepared for ministry. Black students dominated the institution and the teaching staff was multi-racial.

<sup>306</sup> See Ramose B.M. 'The Ethics of *ubuntu*' in *Philosophy from Africa*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition, (eds.) by Coetzee P.H. and Roux A.P.J. 2002:325.

of a fully developed person and the community with others. He further argues that it comprises values, attitudes, feelings, relationships and activities.<sup>307</sup>

Bonganjalo Goba, contends that “*ubuntu* provides character-centred judgments that a person is or a character that is good or bad.”<sup>308</sup> Therefore, this means that one’s morality is categorized and judged according to his or her behaviour. Desmond Tutu’s definition of the concept of *ubuntu* is derived from the expression: ‘*Umntu ngumntu ngabanye abantu*, ‘A person is a person because of others’.<sup>309</sup> In his presidential address, a popular church leader of the Methodist church and a theologian, Khoza Mgojo uses the concept of *ubuntu*. In his understanding of the concept he is convinced that there are two ways of living i.e. the way of *ubuntu* and the behaviour, which is not *ubuntu*. In his definition of the concept he asserts that:

“It is *Ubuntu* to love and care for others. It is *ubuntu* to act kindly towards others. It is *ubuntu* to be hospitable. It is *ubuntu* to be just and fair. It is *ubuntu* to be compassionate and to help those in distress. It is *ubuntu* to be truthful and honest so that people know that one’s word is his/her honour. It is *ubuntu* to have good morals”<sup>310</sup>

Botman, writing in a post-apartheid context and having reflected on Mgojo’s address, suggests that we should recapture this concept of *ubuntu* as an ethical concept that serves as a guiding star on our journey.<sup>311</sup> We must also take this concept of *ubuntu* as an ethical concept that can guide us as we travel the road towards transforming our families and communities.

Without any doubt the concept of *ubuntu* had a tremendous impact in shaping our moral consciousness. It is not perceived to be embracing *ubuntu* to act violently towards others, especially in the abuse of women and children. Those who are involved in such acts have obviously lost the sense of *ubuntu*. The character of a person is shaped by the community and specifically by one’s family. What you do in an African community reflects on the family as well as your background. For instance, if a person does something bad people will always ask a

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<sup>307</sup> See Shutte, *Ubuntu An Ethic for a New South Africa*. 2001:31

<sup>308</sup> See Bonganjalo Goba ‘The norms of ubuntu and ukuhlonipha in African Ethics’ in *A Tribute to Fedsem*, 1998:86

<sup>309</sup> See Michael Battle’s ‘The Ubuntu theology of Desmond Tutu’ in *Archbishop Tutu: Prophetic Witness in South Africa*. 1229:2003

<sup>310</sup> See Mgojo, Presidential address, 1993:1

<sup>311</sup> See Botman H.R. 1993:35.

question *ngumntwana kabani lo?* Meaning, ‘whose child is this?’ Or they will say “*waze walihlazisa igama lakowethu*”, which can literally be translated as: you have insulted the integrity of your family.

When a person is doing well, is behaving well or in other words is virtuous, people will say *unobuntu* meaning that he/she demonstrates *ubuntu* qualities. And as the opposite for that, people will say *sisilwanyana* meaning his/her behaviour is sub-human. *Ubuntu* can be associated with being and doing. This can refer to one’s behaviour, character and actions. In order to change the situation we must instil and revive *ubuntu* in our people.

### **6.5.2. Embodying *Ubulungisa***

The literal translation of *ubulungisa* is “justice,” though from the isiXhosa understanding of the concept it may mean something deeper than simply justice. *Ubulungisa* has an element of *ubuntu*. In *ubulungisa* one does what one would wish to have done unto one. In *ubulungisa* there is no measurement or judgment. In justice there is also action or power or law. There must always be a justification for what one does, meaning that there should be a good or proper reason for what one does.

Broadly speaking, *ubulungisa* can mean to do good unto others, to have a good heart. One will hear people saying *ulungile umntwana kabani*, meaning that “you are so good”. The opposite of this is *ukukhohlakala*, meaning to be cruel. Men today are no longer doing good unto their women and children. Instead they are cruel, through behaving like animals. Women and children no longer feel safe in their homes in the presence of men because they fear for their safety and security.

*Ubulungisa* means to accept and respect fellow human beings. If *ubulungisa* is our objective in this problem of inequality at home and family violence we can achieve something. One thing that we need to understand is that if a person is an abuser and is ill-treating his family he is not doing *ubulungisa* to his family or accepting the responsibility that God gave to us to have authority over creation. If people can be taken back to their roots to bring back *ubulungisa*, without any reasonable doubt, it can be a solution to the problem.

We cannot separate *ubulungisa* from *ubuntu* since *ubulungisa* is the best result of *ubuntu*. Shutte asserts that *ubuntu* is intrinsically related to human happiness and fulfilment.<sup>312</sup> Therefore, *ubulungisa* also seeks happiness within the family and justice to others. If there is no justice within the family or relationships there is no way that there will be happiness. So *ubulungisa* can be seen as one of the value systems for personal growth.

### **6.5.3. Restoring *Ukuhlonipha***

*Ukuhlonipha* means respect as a form of moral obligation. *Ukuhlonipha* is still within the tradition of ethics of virtue that is typical of the African approach to ethics and it is an important moral category. For Africans respect is not limited. One respects the living and the dead, the elderly and the young. A widely known African ethicist, Bujo, concurs with the claim that as Africans we respect the living and the dead.<sup>313</sup> His starting point for respect for the elderly, the living and the dead is from the origin of life from God Himself. It flows in a hierarchical order. At the peak are the ancestors, who are followed by the elders of the community. Lesiba Teffo, addressing the question of respect for elders in his article 'Moral Renewal and African Experience(s)' says: "the notion of respect for the elders in typical African society is not uncommon and is another sound foundation for a healthy relation amongst people."<sup>314</sup> This is fast losing its significance because of the collapse of traditional values within our families and communities.

In most relationships, marriages and homes, there is no more *ukuhloniphana* meaning respect for one another. Men these days do not respect their wives, yet the bible teaches us that men should respect their wives. Such lack of respect leads to bad behaviour such as the abuse of women and children. In an African context *ukuhlonipha* is more on the basis of a relationship with others. This is why it is always associated with respect first and foremost, to one's elders. As Africans we are obligated to respect *abantu abadala* (the elderly people). All that is taking place today means that we do not have respect for our elderly people anymore, because if we had respect for them we would not hear of these acts of abuse because it would be considered to be embarrassing for our parents and families.

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<sup>312</sup> See Shutte, *Ubuntu An Ethic for a New South Africa* 2001:30

<sup>313</sup> See Bujo B. *The ethical dimension of community, The African model and the dialogue between North and South*, 1997:197.

<sup>314</sup> See Lesbian Tiff in *African Renaissance* (ed.)by Makgoba, WM 1999: 158.

The only thing we need today is what Goba suggests, namely “to find new relevance in our contemporary society, the moral values.”<sup>315</sup> If we want to transform our communities and families it is obvious that there will be a need to revive the deeper meaning of *ukuhlonipha* and that is respect for life in its totality. The moral values of *ukuhlonipha* in African ethics can provide us with some insights in our attempt to address some of our current problems in our communities. For Bujo, respect is not restricted to the elderly but affects all people, every human being, including the stranger who does not belong to the clan.<sup>316</sup>

#### **6.5.4. Revisiting the culture of Ukuncedana**

*Ukuncedana* is another African ethic that was taught and has shaped our societies in the past. The moral ethos of *Ukuncedana* means “to support and assist one another.” It means much more than assisting a person. When one practices *ukuncedana* one does not only offer help to the person but one travels the journey with the person that one is helping, until that person has solved the problem.

Because we have lost *ubuntu*, *ubulungisa*, *ukuhlonipha* – respect, we have automatically lost *ukuncedana* – support. In the present day one can easily look at the person who is experiencing a problem without attempting to help. Women are being abused physically and killed in front of us and yet, we are quiet as if nothing is happening. There will be no report about what happened. People do not want to become involved in other people’s lives by assisting them in solving their problems.

From this notion of *ukuncedana* we can transform our communities and our families because each will be there for the other. This will reduce the reason to go and call the police. Together as community members we can try to solve our own problems by practicing *ukuncedana*. Men themselves can help other men who are perpetrators of violence and liberate them from this demon of being abusive. They can form support groups in their communities and rehabilitate one another. People should be encouraged to practice *ukuncedana* at home as well as outside the home and to stop being concerned only about their own lives, because what affects a neighbour automatically affects oneself even if one does not necessarily witness it. This will help us to build better families and more peaceful communities.

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<sup>315</sup> See Goba. B, ‘The Norms of *ubuntu* and *ukuhlonipha* in African Ethics,’ in *Perspectives on Ubuntu, A tribute to Fedsem*, 1998:91.

<sup>316</sup> See Bujo E. 1997: 99.

## **6.5. Conclusion**

In the entire thesis we have learned about the magnitude of family violence within African communities. The extent of violence has been revealed through the statistics from various institutions. It has also identified the causes and consequences of family violence. The thesis has also investigated the reasons why victims are silent about their experiences and it has also responded to how we can break this culture of silence. Having gathered this information, we have tried to learn from other institutions as to how they have dealt with the challenge facing our communities.

This project has made certain suggestions as to how the church could respond to the challenge of family violence. This was done by following Smit's model of the church, how he describes the church i.e. the church as the denomination, the church as the ecumenical church, the church as the congregation, the church as individual Christians and Church as volunteers. In that process this research has attempted to discuss the possible responses to the challenge. In this particular chapter, influenced by the method of the ethical decision-making process of Tödt, we have seen that we have a problem and we have accepted that we need to deal with it. This process has guided us in taking the decision on what needs to be done. This clearly showed us that we have a responsibility. The entire chapter has dealt with recommendations on the road to travel in order to combat family violence. It has dealt with the issue of the transforming and reconstruction of families, healing of families, community-building for a better life, developing responsible citizens, re-orientation of men and re-socialization because all these have been seen as part of the problem.

On the other hand it has also dealt with the structural causes of family violence and has come up with certain proposals. The research has also identified a need for moral regeneration. It made some proposals based on the lessons of African ethics that we can learn from to remedy the situation.

## **APPENDIX 1**

### **Theme: “Gender as a social construction”**

#### **Aim of the lesson:**

Explain what is meant by gender as social construction and ask what they understand by gender-based violence.

The explanation: Sexual identity consists of our physical, biological and natural make-ups as male or females. Gender identity consists of our socio-cultural and psychological make-ups as learnt through socialization into specific roles, attitudes, expectations, entitlements and ownership. In short, one will have to explain further that males and females are born, but men and women are made. Being a man connotes power, strength, prestige and all that goes with priority. On the other hand, being a woman connotes powerlessness, inferior status and a lesser claim to opportunities of leadership, influence and ownership.

The second lesson will be around the issues of patriarchy, matriarchy and equality.

- Social construction of gender is done according to a reigning gender ideology. “Ideology” means a system of thought that determines societal practices. Gender ideology then means the way in which the society thinks about relations between men and women and how this system is promoted through the different institutions around which society is organized.
- Patriarchy consists of the prefix “pat” (father or male) and “archly” (order or chief). In which case, patriarchy means, narrowly, the rule of the father or, widely, the organization of societal affairs in such a way that they promote male supremacy i.e. precedence of rule by and domination by the male. Patriarchy legitimized men’s demotion over women in all spheres.
- Matriarchy is the opposite of this i.e. female supremacy.
- Equality is the ideology that promotes organization and treatment.

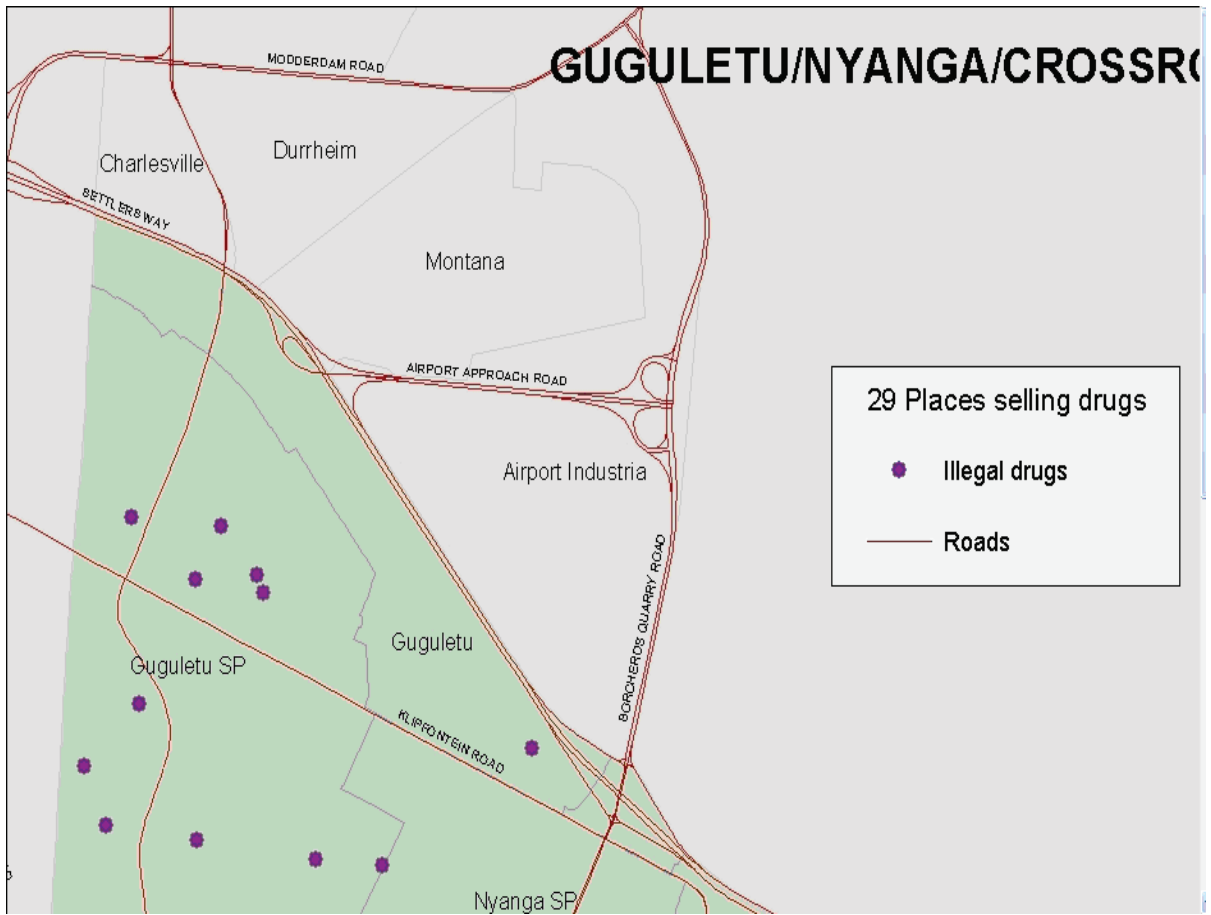
The third lesson will be on institutions, agents and processes of social construction.

Social construction refers to the concept that gender roles and attributes are deliberately and systematically cultivated in female and male over time through processes embedded in the social units around which society are organized. Gender is systematically constructed, maintained, justified and perpetuated according to the existing relational ideology.

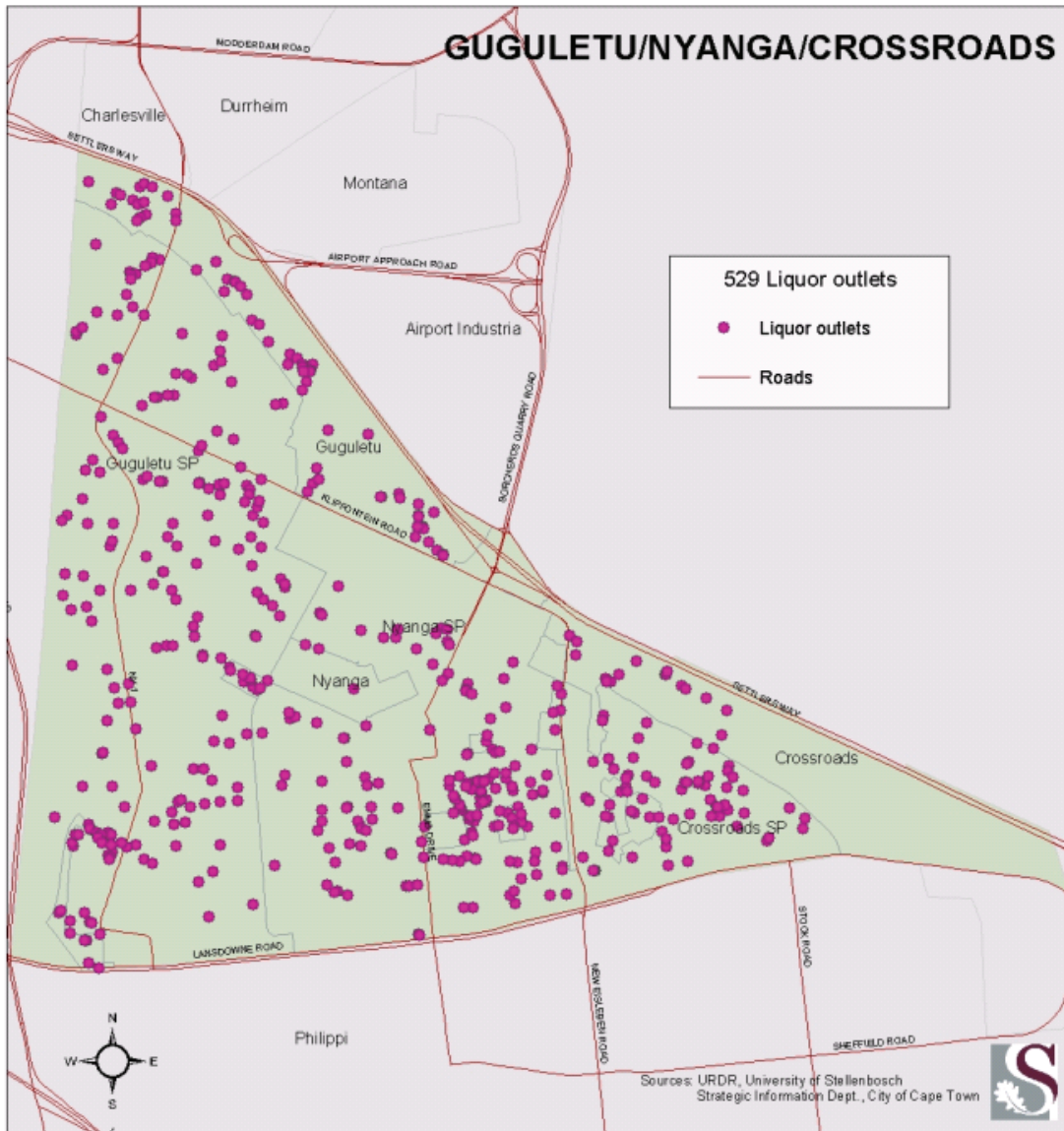
- Systematic: because it is orderly and follows an ideological blueprint of what a woman or man in a particular society should be.
- Constructed: because it is a deliberate action that combines and —
- Maintains: in the sense that there are structures in place to ensure the church or the religious sector is also identified as one of the agents of gender construction, therefore this becomes a challenge to the church as to how it can correct this.



**Appendix 2**



### Appendix 3



## APPENDIX 4

### APPENDIX 1

#### COUNSELING SERVICES:

##### RAPE

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#### **Rape Crisis Cape Town: Observatory Office**

**Physical Address:**

23 Trill Road  
Observatory

**Postal Address:**

P.O.Box 46  
Observatory  
7925

**Services:**

- \* Offers counselling for sexually assaulted women
- \* Offers public education about rape and other forms of women abuse
- \* Training in rape crisis intervention
- \* Assistance to rape survivors and their families/partners in the form of emotional support and practical medical and legal service

Telephone : (021) 447-1467  
Fax : (021) 447-5458  
24 hour : 073 2650 896/ (021) 447-9762  
E-mail : [chantel@rapecrisis.org.za](mailto:chantel@rapecrisis.org.za)

**Contact Person:**

Chantel Cooper (Director)  
Counseling piece – worker

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#### **Rape Crisis Cape Town: Khayelitsa office**

**Physical Address:**

89 Msobomvu Road  
Llitha Park  
Khayelitsa

**Services:**

- \* Offers counselling for sexually assaulted women
- \* Offers public education about rape and other forms of women abuse
- \* Training in rape crisis intervention
- \* Assistance to rape survivors and their families/partners in the form of emotional support, practical medical and legal advice
- \* Training volunteers to join the organization

**Postal Address:**

Observatory  
7925

Telephone : (021) 361-9085  
Fax : (021) 361-0529  
E-mail : [joyce@rapecrisis.org.za](mailto:joyce@rapecrisis.org.za)

**Contact Person:**

Joyce Doni  
Social Worker

### **Llitha Labantu: Gugulethu Office**

**Physical Address:**

NY22-26A  
violence  
Gugulethu  
7750

**Postal Address:**

P.O.Box 7  
7915

Telephone : (021) 633-2383  
Fax : (021) 638-2956  
E-mail : [ilitha@iafrica.com](mailto:ilitha@iafrica.com)

**Contact Person:**

Ms.Ntombi Mcoyi

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**Services:**

- \* Counselling in cases of rape, domestic and child abuse
- \* Family enrichment programmes
- \* Training of counsellors
- \* Police training
- \* Public education
- \* “BRIDGE” employment training project

### **Llitha Labantu: Khayelitsa office**

**Physical Address:**

Shawco A Section  
Khayelitsa

**PostalAddress:**

A500 Makhabeni Road  
Khayelitsa  
7784

Telephone : (021) 361-9731

**Contact Person:**

Lizzie Gundwana

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**Services:**

- \* 9am – 5pm
- \* Counselling and awareness – raising

### **Llitha Labantu: Phillippi satellite branch**

**Physical Address:**

Lutheran Church  
Cnr Eisleben & Landsdowne Rd  
Phillippi

**Postal Address:**

The Magistrate: Phillippi Court  
Private Bag X13  
Westridge  
Mitchell’s Plain

Telephone : (021) 372-0901

**Services:**

- \* Counselling and awareness – raising

**Contact Person:**  
Nosipho Sigwabe

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**Llitha Labantu: Langa satellite branch**

**Physical Address:**  
Thandulwazi Centre  
Zone 16  
Langa

**Services:**  
\* Counselling and awareness – raising

Telephone : (021) 6240

**Contact Person:**  
Nobethu Mfoko

---

**Mosaic Training, Service and Healing Centre for Women**

Physical Address:  
66 Cnr Mortlake & Ottery Road  
Wynberg  
7824

Services:  
A community based non-profit organization that seeks to heal and empower women against abuse and violence.

Telephone : (021) 761-7585  
Fax : (021) 761-7584  
E-mail : [admin@mosaic-sa.co.za](mailto:admin@mosaic-sa.co.za)

- \* Offers supportive and educational services for abused women and female youth
- \* Offers education about abuse, workshops, support groups and counselling
- \* Mosaic Court Support Desks offer support services at Domestic Violence Section of several Magistrates Courts
- \* Counselling skills training for grassroots women and service providers
- \* Public education about abuse
- \* Assertiveness training for women
- \* Training of volunteers to help applicants for protection orders at Magistrate Courts
- \* Public education about abuse and rape  
Counselling and support groups for rape survivors

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**Kuilsriver Support Group**

**Contact Details:**

Telephone : (021) 903-4262  
Fax : (021) 903-4262

**Services:**

- \* 24 hour service
- \* Emergency shelter for rape and domestic violence
- \* Counselling services
- \* Referrals to legal and medical services

E-mail : [dezlyn@iafrica.co](mailto:dezlyn@iafrica.co),

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### **Trauma Centre for Survivors of Violence and Torture**

**Physical Address:**

Cowley House  
126 Chapel Street  
Woodstock  
7925

**Postal Address:**

P.O.Box 13124  
Woodstock  
7915

**Services:**

- \* Trauma counselling to individuals and groups
- \* Training courses to public and frontline workers
- \* Workshops/ courses on understanding violence and trauma
- \* Developing strategies for working with trauma support fro caregivers
- \* HIV/AIDS Counselling

Telephone : (021) 465-7373 \* Mon – Thurs 8:30 am – 4pm  
Fax : (021) 462-3143 Fri 8:30 am – 4:30 pm  
E-mail : [Fatima@trauma.org.za](mailto:Fatima@trauma.org.za)

**Contact Person:**

Fatima Williams

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### **Love in Action**

**Physical Address:**

Beacon Vale Community Centre  
Mitchell's Plain  
Telephone : (021) 319-1925

**Services:**

- \* Counselling services to domestic rape survivors

**Contact Person:**

Dorothy Williams

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### **Western Cape Anti-Crime Forum**

**Physical Address:**

P.O.Box 484  
Gatesville  
7764

**Services:**

Telephone : (021) 699-0913  
Fax : (021) 699-1048

- \* Counselling, referrals and intervention
- \* Training with police
- \* Deal with rape and domestic violence survivors
- \* Anti-crime forum
- \* Training & Development – urban & rural areas
- \* Lobbying and networking with other organizations

**Contact Person:**

Gaynor Wasser

---

## **Thuthuzela Rape Care Centre**

**Physical Address:**

GF Jooste Hospital  
Manenberg

**Postal Address:**

P.O.Box 66  
Manenberg  
7767

Telephone : (021) 690-1011/ 1000/ 691-6194  
Fax : (021) 691-6190

**Contact Person:**

Mandisa Ngonongono

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**Services:**

- \* Provides a safe, enclosed environment for rape survivors (0+years), bathing facilities and clean clothes, tea/coffee/soup, statement taking procedures at hospital, medication for injuries, HIV medication if required, dedicated police and prosecutors through court process

## **Mitchell's Plain Crisis Line**

**Physical Address:**

Room 13/1 OGS Building  
Cnr. 1<sup>st</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue  
Town Centre  
Mitchell's Plain

**Postal Address:**

P.O.Box 103  
Mitchell's Plain  
7785

Telephone : (021) 392-2000  
Fax : (021) 392-2887

**Contact Person:**

Geraldine Young

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**Services:**

- \* Counselling for rape survivors and abused
- \* Drug issues for teens at risk
- \* HIV/AIDS prevention
- \* Paralegal services
- \* Employment services

## **Mosaic Training, Service and Healing Centre for Women: Khayelitsa**

**Physical Address:**

Nolungile Hospital  
Site B  
Khayelitsa

Telephone : (021) 761-7585  
Fax : (021) 761-7584  
Cell : 082 9524 804

**Services:**

- \* Training women and youth assertiveness
- \* Counselling
- \* Workshop on abuse
- \* Public education
- \* Support groups
- \* Extra services

**Contact Person:**

Marina Marco : 084 7492 957  
Charmaine : 084 7492 946

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**DIRKIE UYS COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTRE**

**Physical Address:**

Dirkie Uys CHC  
Cnr. Church & Dinlge Street  
Goodwood

**Services:**

- \* Rape medical and Legal Services
- \* Child abuse medical and Legal Services

Telephone : (021) 590-1644  
Fax : (021) 590-1645

**Contact Person:**

Pulane Ramentse

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**Rape Crisis: George**

**Postal Address:**

Private Bag X6534  
George Hospital  
6530

**Services:**

- \* Crisis counselling
- \* Debriefing and referrals
- \* Open 24 hours

Telephone : (044) 802-4534/ 4498/ 4478  
Fax : (044) 873-6748

**Contact Person:**

Mrs. Visser

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**Family and Marriage Society of South Africa (FAMSA)**

**Physical Address:**

9 Bowden Road  
Observatory

**Services:**

- \* Individual, couple and family counselling for victims/ survivors, perpetrators and children regarding domestic violence
- \* Treatment groups for perpetrators
- \* Marriage/ relationship counselling
- \* Divorce counselling and medication
- \* Training in: Domestic violence, basic counselling skills, couple counselling, trauma debriefing and family counselling

Telephone : (021) 447-7951  
Fax : (021) 447-0174  
E-mail : [famsa@famsawc.org.za](mailto:famsa@famsawc.org.za)  
Website : [www.famsa.org.za](http://www.famsa.org.za)

**Contact Person:**

Davelene Madumo



**FAMSA: George**

**Physical Address:**

Meade Street  
George  
6530

**Postal Address:**

P.O.Box 9621  
George  
6530

**Services:**

- \* Mon-Thurs, 8am – 4pm
- \* Friday – 8am – 1pm
- \* Counselling and information
- \* Family intervention
- \* Training Rape Crisis volunteers
- \* Work closely with shelter
- \* Life skills
- \* AIDS Awareness

Telephone : (044) 874-5811  
Fax : (044) 874-7026  
E-mail : [famsaouteniqua@yahoo.com](mailto:famsaouteniqua@yahoo.com)

**Contact Person:**

Nicolette Pretorius

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**FAMSA: Knysna**

**Physical Address:**

Room 107  
Thesen House  
Knysna  
6570

**Postal Address:**

P.O.Box 2185  
Knysna  
6570

**Services:**

- \* 8am – 4pm
- \* Counselling and support
- \* Focus on whole family, but offers debriefing and counselling to survivors of violence
- \* HIV/AIDS counselling
- \* Life skills

Telephone : (044) 382-5129  
Fax : (044) 382-7961

**Contact Person:**

Lou van der Merwe

---

**FAMSA: Oudtshoorn**

**(Area Serves: Oudtshoorn & Beaufort West)**

**Physical Address:**

196 Church Street  
Oudtshoorn  
6625

**Services:**

- \* 8am – 4pm
- \* Individual and group counselling
- \* HIV counselling

**Postal Address:**

P.O.Box 1036  
Oudtshoorn  
6625

Telephone : (044) 272-7020  
Fax : (044) 272-7020  
E-mail : [famsakaroo@absamail.co.za](mailto:famsakaroo@absamail.co.za)

**Contact Person:**

Caroline Wagenaar

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**Creating Effective Families (CEF) Mossel Bay**

**Postal Address:**

P.O.Box 2319  
Mossel Bay  
6506

Telephone: (044) 691-1411

Fax : (044) 691-1411

E-mail: [cefm@executivemail.co.za](mailto:cefm@executivemail.co.za)

**Contact Person:**

Roeleen Coetzee (Social Worker) or  
Karin Gildenhuys (Shelter)

**Services:**

8am – 1pm

- \* Counselling and information
- \* Run local shelter for battered women
- \* Accommodation and basic needs
- \* FAMSA provide: counselling
- \* Child therapy once a week
- \* Help victims with protection orders
- \* Trauma debriefing
- \* Fees for shelter: R5 per day (negotiable)
- \* Stay: maximum 3 months
- \* Counselling for prevention of drug & alcohol abuse

**Satellite Offices:**

CEF Haven Shelter (Former Sorgen Haven Shelter)

Tel/ Fax : (044) 693-1092

**Contact Person:**

Gaynor Domingo

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**Community Health Centre**

**Physical Address:**

Marine Way  
Next to Fire Station  
Plettenberg Bay

**Services:**

- \* Follow – up after rape
- \* Counselling at Knysna
- \* Hospital

**Postal Address:**

Private Bag X1002  
6600

Telephone : (044) 501-3200

Fax : (044) 533-3846

E-mail : [clinic@plett.gov.za](mailto:clinic@plett.gov.za)

**Contact Person:**

Sr.Noëlle Rist

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## Community Health Centre (Satellite Clinics)

1. KwaNokuthula Clinic – Kwa Nokuthula
2. New Horizons Clinic – New Horizons
3. Craggs Clinic – Kurland Village
4. Kranshoek Clinic – Kranshoek
5. Greenvalley Clinic – Witte Drift

Telephone : (044) 501-3200  
Fax : (044) 533-3846  
E-mail : [clinic@plett.gov.za](mailto:clinic@plett.gov.za)

### **Contact Person:**

Sr.Samuel

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### **Services:**

- \* Ante – natal counselling and examination
  - \* Screening of risk factors
  - \* Referral if needed
  - \* Education
  - \* Post-natal
  - \* Screening for development, impairment of new born and other congenital/ genetic disorders
  - \* Information regarding breast-feeding support
  - \* Education of child-feeding and care
- 

## Beaufort West Provincial Hospital

### **Physical Address:**

Voortrekker Street  
Beaufort West

Telephone : (023) 414-8200  
Fax : (023) 414-2466

### **Contact Person:**

Matron Jonker

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### **Services:**

- \* Crisis counselling available at the trauma unit
- \* Comfort room available in cases of rape, domestic violence and assault
- \* Hospital counsellors do awareness raising at schools

## FEMNET

### **Postal Address:**

Telephone : (023) 414-2765

### **Contact Person:**

Isabella Baartman

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### **Services:**

- \* CBO which intervenes in violent family situations
- \* Refers women and children to Social Services for counselling
- \* Emergency accommodation for – 2 – 3 women or children overnight

## Diakonaledienste: Beaufort West

### **Physical Address:**

20 Brandt Street  
Beaufort West

### **Services:**

- \* Social work and counselling services
- \* Church-based welfare organization

**Postal Address:**

P.O.Box 233  
Beaufort West  
6790

Telephone : (023) 414-3973  
Fax : (023) 414-4976  
E-mail : [bw.badisa@telkomsa.net](mailto:bw.badisa@telkomsa.net)

**Contact Person:**

Audrey Anthony

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**Rape Crisis: Somerset West  
Housed at the Helderberg Crisis Centre**

**Physical Address:**

Helderberg Hospital Complex  
Somerset West

**Services:**

- \* On call 24 hours a day
- \* Medical examination
- \* Crisis counselling

Telephone : (021) 852-5620  
Fax : (021) 852-5620  
Cell (24hr) : 083 484 9409  
E-mail : [rch@freemail.absa.co.za](mailto:rch@freemail.absa.co.za)

**Contact Person:**

Reinette Evans

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**Mosaic Training, Service and Healing Centre: Mbekweni**

**Physical Address:**

W46 Mkhonto Street  
Mbekweni  
Paarl  
7625

**Services:**

- \* Counselling and support services for survivors of rape and domestic violence
- \* Assertiveness training
- \* Support services at Domestic violence section Paarl Court

**Postal Address:**

C/o Cape Town Office  
P.O.Box 940  
Sea Point  
8060

Telephone : (021) 434-7916  
Fax : (021) 434-7586  
E-mail : [miller@iafrica.com](mailto:miller@iafrica.com)

**Contact Person:**

Roelene Miller

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## WEST COAST REGION

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### United Sanctuary Against Abuse

**Postal Address:**

P.O.Box 925  
Reygersdal  
Atlantis  
7359

Telephone : (021) 572-8662

Fax : (021) 572-8662

E-mail : [campus@mweb.co.za](mailto:campus@mweb.co.za)

**Contact Person:**

Ms.Magrieta Ruiters  
083 2439 313/ 082 3622 108

**Services:**

- \* Counselling services for rape, domestic violence and sexual abuse
  - \* Shelter for abused women and children
  - \* Secondary support services:
  - \* Human rights & legal structures
  - \* Court support/ children's court support
  - \* Related support services
  - \* Violence against children and childcare
  - \* SAPS CPU
  - \* Child abuse services
  - \* HIV/AIDS services:
  - \* Counselling
  - \* Shelter
  - \* Training and education
  - \* Services for the aged:
  - \* Day care centre (still in the planning stages)
- 

## COUNSELING SERVICES DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

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### NICRO Women's Support Centre

**Physical & Postal Address:**

4 Buitensingel  
Cape Town  
8001

Telephone: (021) 422-1690

Fax : (021) 424-6879

E-mail : [petula@prov.nicro.co.za](mailto:petula@prov.nicro.co.za)

**Services:**

- \* Offers counselling and legal assistance to women who are or have been physically, emotionally, sexually and/ or economically abused
- \* Open and closed support groups
- \* Trauma debriefing
- \* Training and education

**Contact Person:**

Petula Chamberlain

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### NICRO, Stellenbosch

**Physical Address:**

VGK Centre  
Long Street  
Cloetesville  
Stellenbosch

**Services:**

- \* Crisis intervention in domestic violence situations
- \* Counselling services of domestic victims

Telephone : (021) 889-8720  
E-mail : [nicrowc@wn.apc.org](mailto:nicrowc@wn.apc.org)

**Contact Person:**

Amanda Adams  
(Based at CT office for admin – 447 4000 Fridays only)

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**NICRO: Worcester**

**Physical Address:**

51B Bearing Street  
Worcester

Telephone : (023) 347-2406  
Fax : (023) 347-4540  
E-mail : [nicrowoc@global.co.za](mailto:nicrowoc@global.co.za)

**Services:**

- \* Provides community education and workshops in the schools
- \* Visits farms
- \* Training of volunteers to render counselling services
- \* Liaise closely with police and justice personnel Services with Boland Area

**Contact Person:**

Jurene Horne  
Ceres Police Station (023) 316-5001

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**Nicro: Paarl**

**Physical Address:**

Municipal Building  
Solomon Street  
Paarl East

Telephone : (021) 862-1273  
E-mail : [nicrowc@wn.apc.org](mailto:nicrowc@wn.apc.org)

**Services:**

- \* Counsels abused women and children daily
- \* Train volunteers to maintain the service

**Contact Person:**

Amanda Adams  
( Based at CT office for admin – 447 4000 Fridays only)

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**NICRO, Atlantis**

Vredenburg / Saldanha Police Station  
Atlantis Court

**Physical Address:**

CWD Building  
Cnr. Sun and Penelope Streets  
Avondale  
Atlantis

**Services:**

- \* Support for Abused Women Project
- \* Crisis counselling
- \* Service to all victims of crime
- \* Training volunteers to maintain presence at police stations and court and do victim empowerment

Telephone : (021) 572-7655 \* Mon, Wed, Thurs: 9am – 3pm by  
Fax : (021) 572-1635 appointment only  
E-mail : microatlglobal.co.za \* Atlantis Magistrate Court Witness Support  
Services: Mon – Fri: 9am – 1pm

Tel: 572 1003 ext. 260

**Contact Person:**

Marilyn Gilbert – Harris

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**NICRO: Khayelitsa**

**Physical & Postal Address:**

CWD Building  
E505 Scott Street  
Khayelitsa

Telephone : (021) 361-1393

**Services:**

\* Offers counselling and legal assistance to women who are or have physically, verbally, emotionally, sexually and or/ Economically abused

**Nyanga Police Station**

Tel: (021) 386-3434  
Fax: (021) 386-1973

**Khayelitsa Police Station**

Tel: (021) 361-3330  
Fax: (021) 361-0798

**Contact Person:**

Nomsa (021) 447-4000

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**NICRO: MITCHELL'S PLAIN**

Mitchell's Plain Station  
Mitchell's Plain Court (Witness Support Room)

**Services:**

\* Support to all victims of crime

**Physical Address:**

2 Palestina Street  
Eastridge

\* Crisis counselling

\* Referral to specialized services

\* Court preparation and information

**Postal Address:**

P.O.Box 443  
Town Centre  
Mitchell's Plain  
7789

Telephone : (021) 397-6060/1/2  
Fax : (021) 397-4920  
E-mail : [nadeema@mplain.nicro.co.za](mailto:nadeema@mplain.nicro.co.za)

M'Plain Witness Support Room at court: 370-4220

**Contact Person:**

Nadeema Isaacs

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**NICRO: Atlantis**

**Physical Address:**

Penelope & Sun Streets

Avondale

Atlantis

Telephone : support (021) 572-1635

Atlantis Court: (021) 572-1003

**Contact Person:**

Nolusindiso Mhlauli – based at Mitchell’s Plain Office

**Services:**

- \* Counselling service to victims of domestic violence
- \* Crisis intervention, trauma counselling and debriefing and running of groups
- \* Provision of legal information and advice, assistance to victims to understand court procedures
- \* Fully fledged witness support services
- \* Sensitize and training of relevant service providers around issues concerning victims/ witnesses of crime and domestic violence in order to empower and improve services
- \* Provides training packages i.e. facilitators, stress& trauma management, teen abuse programs, etc.
- \* Community education and outreach programme – capacity building and organizations
- \* Monitoring and advocacy
- \* Implementation of alternative therapies to address and combat domestic violence

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**NICRO: Beaufort West**

**Physical Address:**

C/o Dutch Reform Church, Kerk & Donkin Street  
Beaufort West

Telephone: (023) 415-3677

Fax: (023) 415-3677

**Contact Person:**

Adele van Straaten

**Services:**

- \* Counselling service to victims of domestic violence
- \* Crisis intervention, trauma counselling and debriefing and running of support groups
- \* Provision of legal information and advice, assistance to victims to understand court procedures
- \* Sensitizing and training relevant service providers around issues concerning victims/ witnesses of crime and domestic violence in



- order to empower and improve services
- \* Provides training packages i.e. facilitation, stress & trauma management, teen abuse programs, etc.
  - \* Community education and outreach
- 

### **NICRO: George**

**Physical Address:**

88 York Road  
George  
6529

**Postal Address:**

P.O.Box 10106  
George  
6530

Telephone : (044) 874-5450  
Fax : (044) 874-5450  
E-mail : [nicrogrg@global.co.za](mailto:nicrogrg@global.co.za)

**Services:**

- \* Counselling and support services
- \* Training of counselling volunteers
- \* Training of police in domestic violence issues
- \* Serves George, Knysna, Mossel Bay, Oudtshoorn, Ladysmith and Calitzdorp

**Contact Person:**

Anne Adendorff

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### **Family and Marriage Society of South Africa FAMSA: Observatory**

**Physical Address:**

9 Bowden Road  
Observatory

Telephone: (021) 447-7951  
Fax: (021) 447-0174  
E-mail: [famsa@famsawc.org.za](mailto:famsa@famsawc.org.za)  
Website: [www.famsa.org.za](http://www.famsa.org.za)

family

**Services:**

- \* Individual, couple and family counseling for victims/ survivors, perpetrators and children regarding domestic violence
- \* Treatment groups for perpetrators
- \* Marriage/ relationship counselling
- \* Divorce counselling and medication
- \* Training in: Domestic violence, basic counselling skills, couple counselling, trauma debriefing and counselling

**Contact Person:**

Davelene Madumo

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### **FAMSA: Gugulethu**

**Physical Address:**

9 Masizakele Street  
Gugulethu

**Services:**

- \* Face to face counselling for couples and individuals in the following fields: spouse abuse, family abuse,

Telephone: (021) 637-6706  
**Contact Person:**  
Zimkhita Ntobogwana

- divorce
  - \* Treatment groups with perpetrators
  - \* Family Therapy
  - \* HIV/AIDS referrals
- 

### **FAMSA: Khayelitsha**

**Physical Address:**

CWD Centre  
E505 Scott Road  
Khayelitsha

Telephone: (021) 361-9098  
Fax: (021) 364-0231

**Services:**

- \* Face to face counselling for couples and individuals in the following fields: spouse abuse, family abuse, divorce
- \* Treatment groups with perpetrators
- \* Family Therapy
- \* HIV/AIDS referrals

**Contact Person:**

Ntombekaya Signoya

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### **Mosaic**

**Physical Address:**

66 Cnr Mortlake & Ottery Road  
Wynberg  
7824

Postal Address:  
P.O.Box 940  
Sea Point  
8040

Telephone: (021) 761-7585  
Fax: (021) 761-7584  
E-mail: [admin@mosaic-sa.co.za](mailto:admin@mosaic-sa.co.za)

**Services:**

- \* Offers supportive and educational services for abused women and female youth
- \* Offers education about abuse, workshops, support groups and counselling
- \* Mosaic Court Support Desks offer support services at Domestic Violence Section of several Magistrates Courts
- \* Counseling Skills training for grassroots women and service providers
- \* Public education about abuse
- \* Assertiveness training for women
- \* Training of volunteers to help applicants for protection orders at Magistrate Courts
- \* Counselling and support groups for rape survivors

**Contact Person:**

Roelene Miller

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### **Love in Action**

**Physical Address:**

Bacon Vale Community Centre  
Mitchell's Plain

Telephone : (021) 391-1925

**Services:**

- \* Counselling services to domestic and rape survivors

**Contact Person:**

Dorothy Williams

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### **CWD Woman Awakened Programme: Elsie's River**

**Physical Address:**

Multi-Purpose Centre  
Halt Road  
Elsies River

**Postal Address:**

P.O.Box 75  
Matroosfontein

Telephone: (021) 931-3725

Fax: (021) 931-3725

E-mail: [radicalchange@yahoo.com](mailto:radicalchange@yahoo.com)

**Services:**

- \* Counseling for domestic violence survivors and their family
- \* Counselling at factories for employees and employers
- \* Educational awareness training through role play and talks
- \* Training of volunteers and establishing of support groups
- \* HIV/AIDS education

**Contact Person:**

Lorraine van der Westhuizen  
Sharon Rhode

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### **CWD Domestic Violence Project; Gugulethu**

**Physical Address:**

St Gabriels Catholic Church  
Gugulethu NY5  
7750

**Services:**

- \* 9am – 5pm
- \* Counselling for domestic violence survivors

Telephone : (021) 633-3458/ 637-4420

**Contact Person:**

Zodwa Sonkqavi

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### **Triangle Project**

**Physical Address:**

Unit 26, Waverley Business Park  
experiencing  
Wyckoff Road  
Mowbray  
7705

**Services:**

- \* Counselling and support to clients  
violence in lesbian and gay relationship
- \* Test/ Clinic for HIV/AIDS
- \* Group sessions
- \* Mon-Tues – 8:30 am – 8:30 pm
- \* Wed-Fri – 8:30 am – 4:30 pm
- \* Weekends closed

**Postal Address:**

P.O.Box 13935  
Mowbray  
7705

Telephone : (021) 448-3812

Fax : (021) 448-4089

E-mail : [info@triangle.org.za](mailto:info@triangle.org.za)

**Contact Person:**

Heather Adonis

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**Chumani Woman's Support Group**

**Physical Address:**

31 Natchez Crescent  
Graceland  
Khayelitsha  
7535

Standby : (021) 361-3461

**Services:**

- \* Find safe places for women stay
- \* Counselling
- \* Focus on empowerment
- \* 24hr telephone service
- \* HIV/AIDS refer
- \* Awareness on rehabilitation
- \* Talk on HIV/AIDS

**Contact Person:**

Thoko Speelman

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**Western Cape Anti – Crime Forum**

Postal Address:

Po Box 484  
Gatesville  
7764

Telephone: (021) 699-0913

Fax: (021) 699-1048

Services:

- \* Counselling
- \* Referrals and intervention
- \* Training with police
- \* Deal with rape and domestic violence survivors
- \* Anti-crime forum
- \* Training & Development – urban & rural areas
- \* Lobbying and networking with other organization

**Contact Person:**

Gaynor Wasser

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**Kraaifontein Support Group**

**Physical Address:**

27 Verster Road  
Kraaifontein  
7570

Telephone: (021) 988-4869

E-mail: [bonnie@webmail.co.za](mailto:bonnie@webmail.co.za)

**Services:**

- \* 24 hour service
- \* Emergency shelter for rape and domestic violence survivors
- \* Counselling services
- \* Referrals to legal and medical services

**Contact Person:**

Loretta Thomas

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**New World Foundation**

**Physical Address:**

**Services:**

New World Foundation Building

Grindale Ave  
Lavender Hill  
7945

Telephone: (021) 701-9744  
Fax: (021) 701-9592  
E-mail: [Vanessa@newworldfoundation.org.za](mailto:Vanessa@newworldfoundation.org.za)

- \* Social worker gives advice and help with housing and social issues
- \* Counselling focus on domestic violence
- \* Training Centre
- \* Mon – Thurs 8:30 am – 5pm
- \* Fri. 8:30 am – 3:30pm

**Contact Person:**

Vanessa Brown  
Colette Egypt

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**Sanca**

**Physical Address:**

E505 Scott Street  
CWD Building  
Khayelitsha  
7784

Telephone: (021) 364-5510  
Fax: (021) 364-5510  
Cell: 083 3479 627

**Services:**

- \* Assessment and counselling
- \* Referrals
- \* Prevention programmes
- \* Community education
- \* Training
- \* Aftercare
- \* Support groups
- \* Industrial consultation services

**Contact Person:**

Guyborn Ketse  
Ms.Ntebonheng Rapita

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**N2 South Cape Rural Development Forum**

**Physical Address:**

GA Keyser Centre  
2<sup>nd</sup> Floor  
Room 1  
George  
6530

Postal Address:  
Po Box 1045  
George  
6530

Telephone: (044) 874-3921/ 0721  
Fax: (044) 874-3716

**Services:**

- \* Provides a general service for women living along the N2
- \* Building capacity of women in the rural areas
- \* Referral
- \* Programs on behalf of Department of Health
- \* Training in HIV & general health care to the community

**Contact Person:**

Lorraine Deysel

## **Karoo Centre for Human Rights**

### **Physical Address:**

104B New Street  
Beaufort West  
6970

### **Postal Address:**

Po Box 618  
Beaufort West  
6970

Telephone : (023) 414-2480  
Fax : (023) 414-2470  
E-mail : [kcfr@telcomsa.net](mailto:kcfr@telcomsa.net)

### **Services:**

- \* Prisoner rights (referral) – men/ women
- \* Awareness programmes around Domestic violence, know your rights & how to apply for Interdicts
- \* Farm workers – men/ women, their rights on land issues

### **Contact Person:**

James Diamond

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## **FEMNET**

### **Postal Address:**

Telephone : (023) 414-2765

### **Services:**

- \* CBO which intervenes in violent family situations
- \* Refers women and children to Social Services for counselling
- \* Emergency accommodation for – 2 – 3 women or children overnight

### **Contact Person:**

Isabella Baartman

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## **Women Oppose Violence: Malibongwe Women's Shelter**

Telephone : (044) 272-5739

### **Services:**

- \* offers crisis safe house facilities
- \* currently trying to set up a shelter in Oudtshoorn

### **Contact Person:**

Elaine September

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## **Women Who Care**

### **Physical Address:**

15 Mentol Crescent

### **Services:**

- \* Domestic violence

Avondale  
Atlantis

Telephone : (021) 572-2455  
Fax : (021) 572-3956  
Cell : 082 6968 087

\* Child Abuse  
\* Battered Women  
\* Abuses of the elderly  
\* Battered men  
\* Available for 24 hours

**Contact Person:**  
Farieda Rajap

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### **Wesfleur Day Hospital, Atlantis**

Telephone: (021) 572-3071  
Fax: (021) 572-4420

Services:  
\* Training of volunteers for dealing with  
violence against women cases

**Contact Person:**  
Naomi Seidi

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### **PASTORAL COUNSELLING**

The organizations and individuals listed below have all been interviewed to ensure that they are gender sensitive and are committed to empowering the women who make contact with them. Most are not, however, specialists in Violence Against Women issues.

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### **CHRISTIAN: INTER-DENOMINATIONAL**

Centre for Christian Spirituality

**Physical & Postal Address:**  
1 Chapel Lane  
Rosebank  
7700

Offers spiritual accompaniment.

Telephone : (021) 686 – 1269) 08:30 – except Tuesdays)

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### **Christian Listeners**

Kathy Roberts  
083 3273 550 (afternoons/ evenings, but not later than 10pm)  
Or can leave a message at the Centre for Christian Spirituality (above)

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## Broken Bread Ministries

### Physical Address:

1 Wynne Street  
Parow  
7500

### Services

- \* Offers telephone counselling
- \* Train counsellors
- \* Christian organization

### Postal Address:

P.O.Box 448  
Parow  
7499

Telephone : (021) 939-3333/ 930-1122  
Fax : (021) 930-6436

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## Anglican

### Ordained Priests who can offer counselling services to women

Vivian Harper	:	461-1090	St.Cyprian's School
Claire Nye-Hunter	:	694-5362 (9-1 only)	Bonteheuwel
Erika Murray	:	696-1500 (mornings only)	Athlone
Wilma Jacobsen	:	685-2686	UCT Chaplain
Rachel Mash	:	361-5246 (mornings only)	Khayelitsa

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## Roman Catholic

### Catholic Justice and Peace Commission: Women's Desk

Do not offer counselling, but can make referrals.

### Contact Person:

Josie Philemon

Telephone : (021) 462-2417  
Fax : (021) 461-9330  
E-mail : [info@catholic-ct.org.za](mailto:info@catholic-ct.org.za)

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## MUSLIM

### Divorce Support Group

Deals with issues of domestic violence in both individual counselling and group settings.



Contact Person:  
Najmunisa Solomons

Telephone : (021) 393-1839 (home)  
Mobile : 082 4943 499

Times : 3:30 pm – 7:30 pm Monday, Tuesday and Thursday  
Mornings only : Wednesday and Fridays

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## **JEWISH**

### **Jewish Trauma Network**

Voluntary service, offering short-term counselling, trauma and referrals.  
C/o Jewish Community Services: (021) 462-5520

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### **Nechama**

A bereavement counselling organization, which would take on Violence against Women cases in the specific instance where the woman has been murdered, through rape homicide or intimate femicide, and counselling is made available to her family.

**Contact Person:**  
Pauline

Tel : (021) 465-9390

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### **Union of Jewish Women: Resource Centre**

Tel : (021) 434-9555

**Co-ordinators:**  
Joan Rubenstein  
Debbie Silver

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### **Helderberg/ Winelands**

#### **Anglican**

Clarins Benston : (021) 853-6208 Strand

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### **Kenilworth Clinic**

**Physical Address:**  
32 Kenilworth Rd  
Kenilworth

**Services**  
\* Adult psychiatry – all psychological and psychiatric conditions

7708

- \* Eating disorders
- \* Trauma counselling
- \* Women Issues
- \* Adolescent unit – all adolescent and young adult problems
- \* Addiction unit – Alcohol, substance, sex and gambling

**Postal Address:**

Private Bag X2  
Kenilworth

Telephone : (021) 763-4500  
Fax : (021) 763-4557  
E-mail : [info@kenilworthclinic.co.za](mailto:info@kenilworthclinic.co.za)

**Contact Person:**

Sister in Charge

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**RAPCAN**

**Physical Address:**

DP Marais Centre

C/o of White and Main Road

Retreat

**Postal Address:**

Postnet Suit 87  
Private Bag X12  
Tokai  
7966

Telephone : (021) 712-2330  
Fax : (021) 712-2365

**Contact Person:**

Lorna Siers

**UMAC (U Managing Conflict)**

**Postal Address:**

88 Station Road  
Observatory  
7925

**Services**

- \* Community development and conflict resolution
- \* Conflict resolution interventions e.g. Mediation, crisis intervention
- \* Process facilitation primarily@

Telephone	:	(021) 442-3600	community level
Fax	:	(021) 448-5476	* <b>Capacity building and training:</b>
E-mail	:	<a href="mailto:Baba@umac.org.za">Baba@umac.org.za</a>	* Conflict resolution and peace building
	:	<a href="mailto:Jasmin@umac.org.za">Jasmin@umac.org.za</a>	* Gender and peace building
	:	<a href="mailto:umac@umac.org.za">umac@umac.org.za</a>	* Criminal justice and system
			* Social crime prevention
			* Election monitoring

**Please note: We have been unable to locate perpetrator services in the rural areas, contact us for information for the next edition.**

### **CREATIVE EDUCATION WITH YOUTH AT RISK (CRED)**

**Physical Address:**

1 Scott Road  
Observatory  
7925

**Services: (Boys and Girls: 14 – 25)**

**Awaiting Trail** – Pre-trial awareness and Behavioural Change

**Postal Address:**

P.O.Box 2565  
Cape Town  
8000

**Sentenced Programme** – personal development and self expression

**Pre – release programme** – Life and Social Skills

**Post – Release Programme** – access to opportunity & reintegration

Tel	:	(021) 447-1999
Fax	:	(021) 448-5192/ 086 616 2674
E-mail	:	<a href="mailto:valda@cred.org.za">valda@cred.org.za</a>

**Contact Person:**

Valda Lucas

**PERPETRATOR SERVICES**

We have been unable to locate perpetrator services in the rural areas, please contact us with information for the next edition.

### **Family and Marriage Society of South Africa (FAMSA)**

**Physical Address:**

9 Bowden Road  
Observatory

**Services:**

- \* Fees charged according to sliding scale
- \* Counselling on spouse abuse/ wife battering
- \* General stopping violence programme
- \* 15 wk rehabilitation programme either voluntary/court mandated
- \* Basic counselling skills

\* 8:30 am – 4:30 pm

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## **CATTS**

### **Physical Address:**

Kenilworth Clinic  
Kenilworth Road  
Kenilworth  
7780

### **Postal Address:**

P.O.Box 24525  
Landsdowne  
7779

Tel : (021) 797-1400  
Fax : (021) 761-9109  
Cell : 082 490 6469  
E-mail : [abuseissues@mweb.co.za](mailto:abuseissues@mweb.co.za)

### **Services:**

- \* Sexual deviance and violence
- \* Marital problems
- \* Child & Adolescent aggression
- \* Domestic violence
- \* Trauma (counselling)
- \* Child abuse, rape and incest

### **Contact Person:**

Marcel Londt

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## **Prisoners Friend, Wynberg Court**

### **Postal Address:**

Private Bag X3  
Wynberg  
7824

Tel : (021) 799-100/73  
Fax : (021) 761-4518  
Contact Person:  
Mrs.Pillay

### **Services:**

- \* Diversion of juveniles to Nicro after they have been referred there by the Court or if their family seeks help for them

## **Centre for Conflict Resolution (CUT)**

### **Postal Address:**

Bertram Place  
Hiddingh Campus 31-37  
Orange Street  
Cape Town

### **Services:**

- \* Mediation
- \* Facilitation
- \* Training

Tel/ Fax : (021) 422-2622

### **Contact Person:**

Fiona Grant

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## **APPENDIX 5**

### **BIBLE STUDY MATERIAL**

At this stage one will give a sample of a bible study guide that people can develop theirs from this example. The title of the study that will be used is: “*How to use power*”. This example is used because power is the major cause of family violence and perpetrators use power against their victims.

<b>HOW DO WE USE POWER?</b>
<i>To Begin</i>
Think about electricity. What does electricity enable you to do? What are the risks of using electricity? (If you are working in a group, you could provide each half to look at one question and then sharing their answers.) What other things in life are useful, yet dangerous? Who decides what happens in your family, church, local community and nation? It could be an individual or collective decision. Who gave them the authority to decide? How do you judge whether decisions are good or bad?
<i>To Help You Reflect on Power</i>
Power is simply the ability to control and to make things happen. In order to know where it came from, the intention with which it is used and the outcomes of its use, in your opening discussion on electricity you may have noted factors such as whether it was generated using renewable resources or by polluting power stations, the possibility of an exploitative energy market, the dangers of shock and fire and the benefits of light, heat and domestic and commercial machinery. Electricity is a good example of any form of power which is useful, dangerous and raising some complex issues.
We can see violence as a misuse or abuse of power. That should not make us deny power or refuse power. This is where power and violence differ. We may be able to look forward without violence, but we cannot do without power. Even if we feel weak and insignificant, every one of us, individually and together, has the power to do certain things. We need the power to right wrongs and to bring healing and reconciliation. Without the use of power, nothing good happens. Where does power come from? One answer is that it comes from God. That could be recognition that God is the originator of everything or that power comes as a gift of the Holy Spirit. Some would want to relate power to the nature of God. It is possible to select biblical text, which appear

to justify a violent use of power because that is the way God wants it. It is equally possible to project back on God our own misuse of power so as to justify it. In choosing such a possibility, we turn faith upside down and make God in our own violent image. Yet, the power of the resurrection is nothing like the power of a fist, a missile or an economic system.

There is power that is in each of us – perhaps this is one of the ways in which we are made in the image of God. There is greater power when we are together. We are the strong images in the Hebrew scriptures of the people of God in the New Testament of the church and the kingdom of God. Sometimes we talk of empowering people though power is something we possess, that we kindly give to others. We should rather talk of accompanying people in learning how to exercise their own power.

For all of us, power implies taking responsibility for the way in which we use it. Remembering that we suggested earlier that the rest of power is the intention with which it is used and its outcomes, let's look at five inter-connected types of power.

### **PHYSICAL FORCE**

We can make things happen or prevent them from happening by the threat and use of physical violence. Both the armed robber and the armed police officer work on the same principle if you have a gun pointed at your head, you are less inclined to resist. The bully at your school playground and the international superpower adopt the same approach – I'm bigger than you, so do things my way. This makes for uncomfortable reading for some of us and there may be other things to be said. Why, when we can't get our own way (good or bad), do we resort to physical violence? What is the alternative?

### **RESOURCE POWER**

If I own or control something that you need, I have power over you. I can use my resource power to make you behave in particular ways. Parents sometimes do this with their children to produce good behaviour, offering rewards or threatening to deprive them of enjoyable activities. Global economic institution does the same with nations, requiring them to adopt certain policies through the promise of financial reward or threat of withdrawal of assistance. Resources also include natural resources. Resource power works only when few control the resources that many need. What alternative should we offer?

### **KNOWLEDGE POWER**

This is closely related to resource power. It is possible to keep what we know to ourselves for our own benefit. Knowledge is becoming a commodity with the same kind of international legal protections, so it may be bought and sold – even if it is someone else's traditional knowledge. Another kind of power is that of a media, to share or distort knowledge as it suits their purposes.

## POSITION POWER

Some people have power because of a position they hold – for example, president and prime minister, bishop and priest, director and manager, husband and parents. In the end, position power can operate only with the consent of those who are governed. In some cultures, elders have position power from respect given to them. How do we make sure that those who are given privileged positions are accountable for their decisions and act with consent?

We should also note that sometimes churches have position power because of their constitution or accepted role in society. The same question regarding privilege may still be asked.

## MORAL POWER

This is exercised by those who by the sheer force of their personality demand our attention. Their influence can be to the good but it can be equally evil.

How do we judge the use of power as we experience and observe it?

## BIBLE STUDY

King David is remembered in popular imagination for two things: an act of heroism and a monstrous abuse of power. The story of Bathsheba, David and Uriah is not particularly about sexual promiscuity. After all, David had many relationships in ways that were culturally acceptable to his contemporaries. When David caught sight of Bathsheba and had her brought to his room, he entered on a disastrous course of action. Bathsheba became pregnant. In attempt to cover this up, David tried to persuade Uriah, her husband who had been away at war, to return home so that the child be born and could be thought to be his. Out of a sense of responsibility to his comrades, Uriah refused. So David gave a cynical order to have Uriah placed on the front line of the next battle. Uriah was killed in action, and David took Bathsheba as one of his wives.

READ 2 SAMUAL 12.1-7a

In what ways do you see David abusing his power?

Why do you think that David seemed genuinely to want to use his power to right wrong in Nathan's story and yet, seemed unable to see or control his own abuse of power?

READ PHILIPPIANS 2.5-11

This is a beautiful passage where Paul is probably quoting a very early hymn of praise. It says many things about Christ, many of which is worth meditating on. Instead, concentrate on what this says about power.

What does this passage tell us about the use of power?

Why is the way of self-emptying, identification and death so powerful?

What do these two passages say to you about the way you exercise power in your relationships?





## GLOSSARY

1. <i>Ubulungisa</i>	Righteousness
2. <i>Ikhaya</i>	Home
3. <i>Usapho</i>	Family
4. <i>Ilobola</i>	Dowry
5. <i>Abantu</i>	People
6. <i>Umkhwenyana</i>	Son in-law
7. <i>Amadodakazi</i>	Daughter in-law
8. <i>Mama-zala</i>	Mother in-law
9. <i>Unozaku-zaku</i>	Man's ambassadors to Makoti's family
10. <i>Inkukuma</i>	Pile of rubbish
11. <i>Makoti</i>	Newly wed woman
12. <i>Ubuntu</i>	Humane
13. <i>Ubunye</i>	Unity
14. <i>Bambanani</i>	Hold together
15. <i>Ukuzinikela</i>	Commitment
16. <i>Ithemba</i>	Hope
17. <i>Ukukhululeka</i>	Liberation
18. <i>Ukukhathala</i>	Caring
19. <i>Ukuncedana</i>	Assisting
20. <i>Ukuhlonipha</i>	Respect
21. <i>Ubunye ngamandla</i>	Unity with strength
22. <i>Umntu</i>	Person
23. <i>Ulungile</i>	Good
24. <i>Isandla sihlamba esinye</i>	Helping one another
25. <i>Umntungumntu ngabantu</i>	Person is a person through others
26. <i>Isilwanyana</i>	Animal

## **TEN KEY WORDS**

1. Violence
2. Family
3. Human rights
4. Culture
5. Socialization
6. Healing
7. Transformation
8. Reconstruction
9. Rehabilitation
10. Reconciliation

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